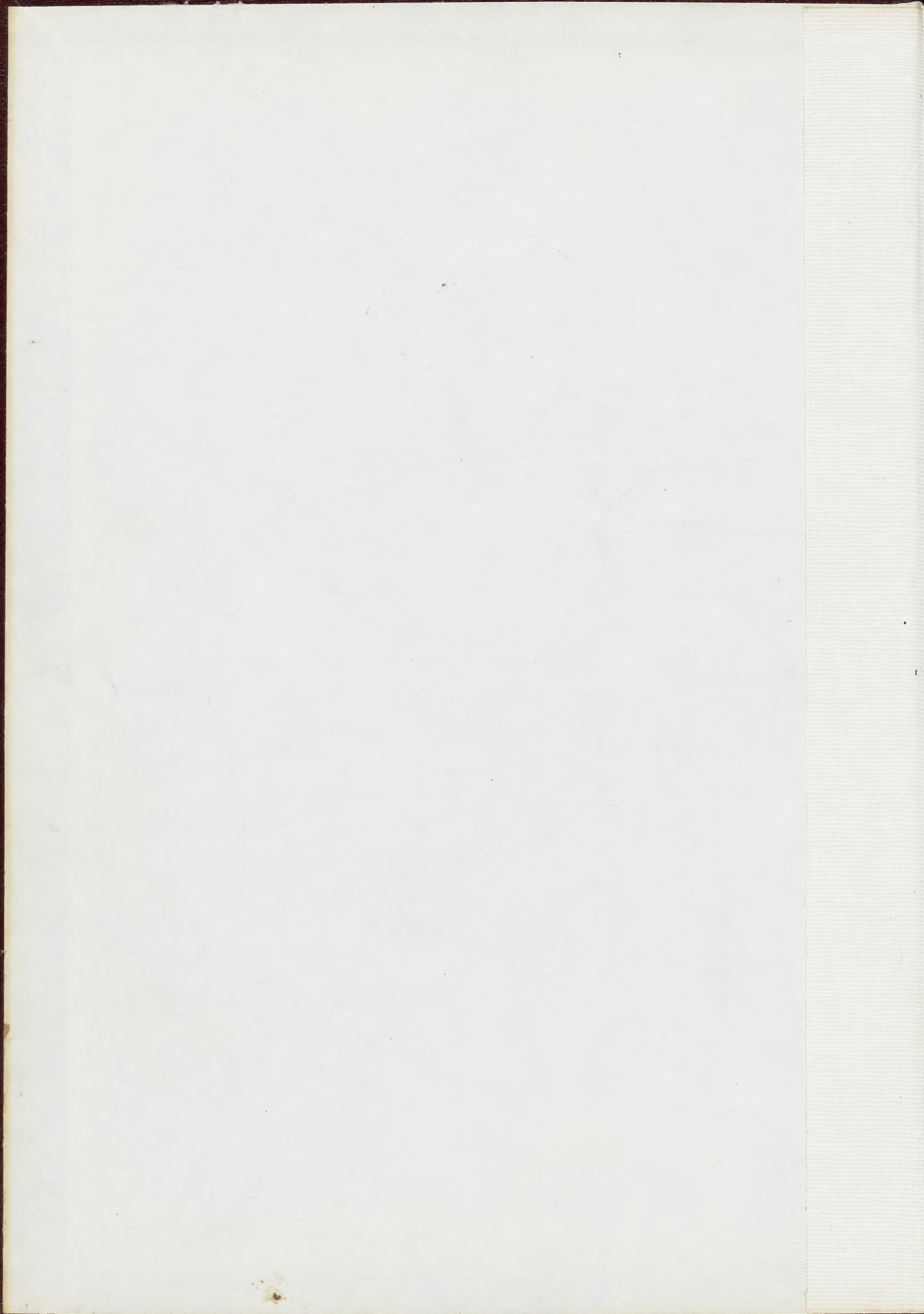


RACE TODAY

1981-82

DARCUS HOWE





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Edited by Darcus Howe and Linton Kwesi Johnson

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C L R James on Ntozake Shange

THE CAPTAIN AND THE COWARDS

A short story by Bobby Sands

BLACK BEARD IN PROFILE

by Linton Kwesi Johnson

£1

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INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth issue of our unique, annual publication, the 'Race Today Review'. We are aiming to concentrate and present the best in cultural artefacts nurtured in the international, black and Asian experience.

We have included, in the last four years, the works of the 'giants' of our time, always with an eye and ear to the creations of humble, lesser known folk — the strivings of our beginners.

It is striking, that in a period of four years, we have been unable to unearth any work of art, created from within and about Britain's black community, which has a capacity 'to turn the head'. There is the solitary exception: the writings and recordings of the poet, Linton Kwesi Johnson.

Linton is able to attract crowds of 1,000 to a poetry reading anywhere in Britain and Europe. He has appeared publicly on more than 50 occasions in 1981 at venues throughout Britain and Europe. He has sold quarter of a million records and 25,000 copies of two volumes of poetry. All in five short years. His audience is not exclusively black; in fact, the vast majority is white. He was born in Chapelton, Jamaica, son of peasant people. He came to Britain when he was 11, and he was educated at a comprehensive school in Brixton. He is only 29. His formidable achievement is proof positive of the impact we are able to make on the general population of Europe.

Why hasn't Linton's success extended to others in our community? Why the dearth of powerful creativity? I will state what I think are the reasons.

First, artistic creativity is fed and stimulated in an ambience which generates work of the highest quality. It requires vibrant, social institutions in which the works are concentrated and made available to those who strive to create. Britain, today, is not such a place. Some people write books and others may buy and read them. Plays are staged and audiences go or stay away. And we can cover all the arts in this humdrum way.

What distinguishes the present period from the artistic heights scaled by previous generations in the life of British society, is the crippling bankruptcy which pervades the world of art in Britain today. The descent has been rapid. Nothing, virtually nothing, exists to stimulate the depth of talent (illustrated by Linton's work) which exists in the black and Asian communities.

And we have a fine tradition from which to draw. Sataygit Ray, the Bengali, is one of the great film makers of the day. The Asian community inherits the tradition, shaped by Tagore. He is the founding father of modern, Indian literature and one of the foremost poets of his period. George Lamming, Vidia Naipaul (until recently) and Wilson Harris have forged the highest literary standards in our world. But the prevailing mediocrity cripples and undermines such a fine inheritance.

Linton has been able to transcend these formidable hurdles for these reasons. He had, available to him (and he has told us this) the tremendous stock of black, American literature which flowed from the black power uprisings of the late 1960s. His recordings have been enriched by the technical innovations of the pop era — a solitary oasis in an artistic desert. And there to harness, discipline and develop his talents was the Caribbean Artists Movement which was founded by John La Rose, Eddie Brathwaite and Andrew Salkey (1966 to the early 70's) to discover new directions for Caribbean art. They held seminars, made literature available, organised readings and conferences, introduced the work of new writers and examined the critical tradition. All this was available to Linton, and, through it, he developed rapidly.

Secondly, we have been stifled by the uncertainty of our existence here in Britain. Even the greats, Naipaul, Lamming and Harris, have been writing out of their past consciousness.

The uprisings of the summer will have accelerated the processes through which our uncertainty is brought to an end. Menelik Shabazz, Farrukh Dhondy, Imruh Caesar, Leslee Wills, Errol Lloyd, Akua Rugg stand on the threshold. There will be others; the basis is there.

New Beacon Books, Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications and Race Today Publications are durable institutions which have fostered and will continue to foster the ambience in which these will continue to grow. The First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books to be organised by these three publishing houses at Islington Town Hall (1st - 3rd April 1982) establishes another bridgehead in overcoming the strictures of Britain's artistic bankruptcy.

Darcus Howe, Editor
December 1981

A black and white portrait of a woman with short, dark hair styled in a bun. She is wearing a light-colored, possibly patterned, jacket over a dark top. She has multiple necklaces, including a prominent chain and a beaded necklace. She is looking off to the right with a slight smile. The background is dark and out of focus.

In two lectures at the Riverside theatre, Hammersmith, London (August 1981), C L R James introduced a British audience to the works of three black, American women writers: 'Sula' by Toni Morrison, 'Meridian' by Alice Walker and 'Nappy Edges' by Ntozake Shange. Here, C L R James, in an extract from the first lecture, discusses 'Nappy Edges', a volume of poetry by Ntozake Shange.

At the present time, I believe the society in which we live is destined to developments of the most drastic kind. I am not going to try to make any propaganda here, but I will tell you that I believe that we are moving towards two different types of society. One of them is what is taking place in Poland. The world is moving to becoming a society in which the majority of people will form solidarity parties, or if we are not doing that, we are going, on the other hand, to regimes that are described by Solzhenitsyn in his book, 'Gulag Archipelago'.

For hundreds of years, black women in America have scrubbed, have washed, have run errands, have done all the dirty work in that society. During the last ten years, they have

These are tremendous things to say, and I can only say them because I am going to prove them to you. I am going to give you the opportunity to prove them. I thought I would let you have that introduction, so you will understand, from some of the things that I say, that I'm not being extreme, that I really believe that we have, here, some of the most important pieces of writings that are taking place in the world today, about the world which is to come, and which contain the most drastic attacks upon present day society.

I am going to take two books tonight. I am going to take, first, the book called 'Nappy Edges' by Ntozake Shange. She is not an African women; she is an American woman. She comes from the American middle class, is in contact with many intellectuals, blacks and whites, went to a good college and then started to write. And she is writing chiefly poetry. There is only one thing that I have to say in advance about 'Nappy Edges'. Shange uses words which are not used by polite people in polite conversation. Whenever she uses that word, I shall say 'they made love to each other'. It is a four letter word. You will know it, but I am not going to be one to introduce it to the platform while hiding behind Ntozake Shange.

Now, Ntozake Shange is a poet and she states it:

people keep tellin me to put my feet on the ground
 i get mad & scream/ there is no ground
 only shit pieces from dogs horses & men who dont live
 anywhere/ they tell me think straight & make myself
 somethin/ i shout & sigh/ i am a poet/ i write poems/
 i make words/ cartwheel & somersault down pages
 outta my mouth come visions distilled like bootleg
 whiskey/ i am like a radio but i am a channel of my own
 i keep saying i do this/ & people keep askin what am i
 gonna do/
 what in the hell is goin on?

... people keep tellin me these are hard times/ what are
 you gonna be
 doin ten years from now/ what in the hell do you
 think/ i
 am gonna be writin poems/ i will have poems/ inchin
 up the
 walls of the lincoln tunnel/ i am gonna feed my
 children poems on
 rye bread with horseradish/ i am gonna send my
 mailman off
 with a poem for his wagon/ give my doctor a poem
 for his heart/
 i am a poet/ i am not a part-time poet/ i am not
 an amateur
 poet/....

Now, that is her case for being a poet. Today, people don't
 write that way. That is the way Keats, Shelley, Browning and
 such people wrote about their own day, with the feeling that
 what they did mattered. Shelly had a fine phrase, "poets are
 the unacknowledged legislators of the world", and Shange
 believes that about poetry. She isn't writing poetry as a literary
 avocation. She is writing poetry about her own world, about
 the United States today, and she takes part in the world
 around her. Try to get this:

every 3 minutes a woman is beaten
 every five minutes a
 woman is raped/ every ten minutes
 a lil girl is molested
 yet i rode the subway today
 i sat next to an old man who
 may have beaten his old wife
 3 minutes ago or 3 days/ 30 years ago
 he might have sodomized his
 daughter but i sat there
 cuz the young men on the train
 might beat some young woman
 later in the day or tomorrow
 i might not shut my door fast
 enuf/ push hard enuf
 every 3 minutes it happens
 some woman's innocence
 rushes to her cheeks/ pours from her mouth
 like the betsy wetsy dolls have been torn
 apart/ their mouths
 mensis red & split/ every
 three minutes a shoulder
 is jammed through plaster & the oven door/
 chairs push thru the rib cage/ hot water or
 boiling sperm decorate her body
 i rode the subway today
 & bought a paper from a
 man who might
 have held his old lady onto
 a hot pressing iron/ i dont know
 maybe he catches lil girls in the

park & rips open their behinds
 with steel rods/ i cdnt decide
 what he might have done i only
 know every 3 minutes
 every 5 minutes every 10 minutes/ so
 i bought the paper
 looking for the announcement
 there has to be an announcement
 of the women's bodies found
 yesterday/ the missing little girl
 i sat in a restaurant with my
 paper looking for the announcement
 a yng man served me coffee
 i wondered did he pour the boiling
 coffee/ on the woman cuz she waz stupid/
 did he put the infant girl/ in
 the coffee pot/ with the boiling coffee/ cuz she cried
 too much
 what exactly did he do with hot coffee
 i looked for the announcement
 the discovery/ of the dismembered
 woman's body/ the
 victims have not all been
 identified/ today they are
 naked & dead/ refuse to
 testify/ one girl out of 10's not
 coherent/ i took the coffee
 & spit it up/ i found an
 announcement/ not the woman's
 bloated body in the river/ floating
 not the child bleeding in the
 59th street corridor/ not the baby
 broken on the floor/

"there is some concern
 that alleged battered women
 might start to murder their
 husbands & lovers with no
 immediate cause"

i spit up i vomit i am screaming
 we all have immediate cause
 every 3 minutes
 every 5 minutes
 every 10 minutes
 every day
 women's bodies are found
 in alleys & bedrooms/ at the top of the stairs
 before i ride the subway/ buy a paper/ drink
 coffee/ i must know/
 have you hurt a woman today
 did you beat a woman today
 throw a child cross a room
 are the lil girl's panties
 in yr pocket
 did you hurt a woman today

i have to ask these obscene questions
 the authorities require me to
 establish
 immediate cause

every three minutes
 every five minutes
 every ten minutes
 every day

She says that is happening every five minutes, every ten minutes, every day, and she is asked for immediate cause. You see, that is what is going on, that is immediate cause. She is passionately angry about what is going on, and she interferes in her

own way. Then sometimes, she entangles herself with modern political life:

today the cosmos satellite fell down over uranium city
british columbia, canada. with 100 pounds of uranium
235 on board. there were international secret meetings
for months. no one told me.
today it all cda been over.
i wdnt have had to listen to governor turner refuse to
pardon the wilmington 10 cuz he didnt believe the lies
the liars recanted/ i wdnt have to know that 4 or 3
million american women who take the pill & smoke are
10 times more likely to have heart attacks than women
who dont take the pill or dont smoke?

what in the hell am i sposed to do?

. . . baron empain waz kidnapped in paris today/by god
only knows who. for 20 million francs. surely 20 million
francs cd fix the pill. the wilmington 10 defense
committee cd use 20 million francs/ 20 million francs
wd assuage my troubles with rapid transit. i need a
cigarette cuz this is just too much for me. plus there
are women who actually find sex boring/ me/ i'm gonna
have a heart attack.

Sometimes she writes poetry, in the old Tennysonian style,
but using modern language and modern things:

you fill me up so much
when you touch me
i cant stay here
i haveta go to my space

people talk to me
try to sell me cocaine
play me a tune
somebody wanted to give me a message
but i wuz thinkin abt you
so i waz in my space

i'm so into it
i cant even take you

tho i ran there with you
tho you appear to me by the riverbed

i cant take you
it's my space
a land lovin you gives me

shall i tell you how my country looks
my soil & rains
there's a point where the amazon meets the mississippi
a bodega squats on the eiffel tower
toward mont saint michel

i'm so into it
i cant even take you

it's my space
a land lovin you gives me

Now, those of you, who are aware of literature, know that
Ben Johnson wrote about Shakespeare, and how they used to
meet Elizabethan poets at the Mermaid Tavern, and drink and
eat and make jokes with them. William Hazlitt writes about
himself, Samuel Coleridge, Wordsworth and others. Dostoevsky,
Tolstoy, and Gorki, they write about themselves. Here is
Ms Shange writing about poets.

we usedta call ourselves the COSMIC-DU-WOP
COMMUNE. poets mostly & some musicians. thulani,
jessica hagedorn, nashirantosha & pepo priester, pedro
pietri, papoieto melendez, etnairis rivera, gylan kain, &
carol le sanchez, & paul vane, roberto vargas, alejandro
murguia, victor hernandez-cruz & tom cusan.

Do you realise that she is referring to an international body of
people; that she is strongly associated with Latin American
people, and there are an African or two, an East Indian there,
a white American. And she writes those names so you should
understand.

She says:

we are
all so transient. nothing changes too much for any of
us. we write poems. we read the poems. we find out who
pays money to read the poems. we go there. we read to
each other, drink wine, walk the streets with each other
making poems. we like to fall in love & be poets. i'm not
sure anybody enjoys our stuff as much as we do. or even
if people realize how essential poems are to our
existence.

She is one of them. When you are familiar with the literature
that these great writers write about themselves, and the life
that they lived, you realise that she is a poet writing about the
present generation of poets who have an attitude to poetry.
That's a genuine poem about the poetic life and the poetic
temperament. I don't know anyone better.

And here is one of the most beautiful of her poems, about a
girl she knows. And this girl is her friend, Jessica Hagedorn.

sometimes you remind me of lady day

Do you know whom she means by Lady Day? Does anybody
know. That's Billy Holliday. That's one of the most marvelous
women America has ever had. She is a great singer and she
went to jail for drugs. Billy Holliday used to perform in New
York. I have seen many great performers, but I have never
seen a woman who walked onto the stage, commanded it by
her performance and walked off — the dignity, the grace, the
conscious power and style; unbelievable. And Shange is looking
at this friend of hers and says:





Get It & Feel Good

you cd just take what
he's got for you
i mean what's available
cd add up in the long run
if it's music/ take it
say he's got good
dishwashing techniques
he cd be a marvelous
masseur/ take it
whatever good there is to
get/ get it & feel good

say there's an electrical
wiring fanatic/ he cd
come in handy some day
suppose they know how to tend plants
if you want somebody
with guts/ you cd go to a rodeo
a prize fight/ or a gang war might be up your alley
there's somebody out there
with something you want/
not alla it/ but a lil
bit from here & there can
add up in the long run

whatever good there is to get
get it & feel good
this one's got kisses
that one can lay
linoleum
this one likes wine
that one fries butter fish
real good
this one is a anarcho-musicologist

this one wants pushkin to rise again
& that one has had it with the past tense/
whatever good there is to get/
get it & feel good
this one cd make music
roll around the small of
yr back & that one jumps
up & down in the gardens
it cd be yrs
there really is enuf to get
by with in this world but
you have to know what yr looking
for/ whatever good there is to get
get it & feel good
you have to know what
they will give up easily
what's available is not always
all that's possible
but there's so much fluctuation
in the market these days
you have to be
particular
whatever good there is to get
get it & feel good
whatever good there is to get
get it & feel good/ get it & feel good
snatch it & feel good
grab it & feel good
steal it & feel good
borrow it & feel good
reach it & feel good
you cd
oh yeah
& feel good.

C. Ntozake Shange



sometimes you remind me of lady day
 & i tell you sadness
 the weariness in yr eyes/ the walk you have
 kinda brave when you swing yr hips
 sometimes serenity in yr eyes
 & the love always.

Her range is very wide.

I will read one last poem. You know the story of Patricia Hearst? The millionaire girl who was fighting with blacks. She went to jail, and they let her out shortly after. Have you read Richard Wright's novel, 'Native Son'? Where a young black boy gets mixed up with some white people who take an interest in communists. He gets into trouble with her accidentally; he then burns her in a furnace and runs away. His girl friend may know what he has been doing, so he kills her. His name is Bigger, and here Ntozake Shange is writing about Patricia Hearst:

(in the bay area in the spring of 1974
 the black community was besieged by the
 hysteria created by the coincidental
 S.L.A. Patricia Hearst kidnapping & bank
 robbery & the alleged 'Zebra' killings.
 everyday for three months the media
 announced 'the suspect is black & in his
 early twenties,' every day every one of us
 (women included) under 6ft., brown black beige,
 was subject to suspicion of wanton murder.
 wanton oppression the likes of which
 suggest the trips to tule lake, pinochet's
 stadium, the days of blood in buenos aires.)

i always hated bigger
 thomas he treated bessie
 sooooo bad a brown girl
 trying to sing thru bitter winter young
 & accustomed to brutes bessie
 was a secondary murder an effect

dying with her in the vacant bldg
 bigger thomas was no longer a man to me
 bigger thomas was a thug with no love
 til i remembered who
 mary dalton was
 a hincty smart aleck rich white girl

troubled bout the colored problem & the jews
 concerned bout bringin some excitement to her
 life/ mary dalton cost bessie a possible lover
 a gig in a segregated tavern maybe
 a new dress her grandchildren
 it was mary dalton her drunken ashes
 her wanton charred bones sent thousands of
 bullets looking for a blk boy
 any one nigger wd do the suspect is black
 & in his early 20's
 the suspect is our sons
 again prey to whims & caprices of
 grande dame white ladies
 with tears & curses for their fathers
 white ladies whose consciences drive them to
 come to us drive them to join us
 patricia hearst alias mary dalton
 has joined us
 has paraded her debutante
 bred body in front of the 7 headed serpent
 machine gun in hand she wants the people
 to embrace her soft white fingers/ to save us
 from death/ the compulsion of fascists to kill. . . .

I have read no finer modern poet, and it is most noticeable
 that when she makes references about somethings, everyone in
 the United States will understand. She has been to Paris, she
 has been everywhere, and she is a great success in the United
 States, particularly her play 'For Coloured Girls'. It was played
 here in London. Did any of you see it? It wasn't successful
 here, but was a rave hit in the United States.

So that's what I recommend to you, Ntozake Shange's
 'Nappy Edges'.

International Book Fair Radical Black 3rd World

First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books

At Islington Town Hall Upper Street Islington London N1

On Thursday 1st Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd April 1982

Opening times

Thursday and Friday 11.00 am — 5.00 pm

Saturday 10.30 am — 4.30 pm

Cost of Stands:

1 double stand	3 x 12 ft (91.5 x 366 cm)	£250.00
1 single stand	3 x 6 ft (91.5 x 183 cm)	£120.00
Half of a stand	3 x 3 ft (91.5 x 91.5 cm)	£ 48.00
One third of a stand	3 x 2 ft (91.5 x 61cm)	£ 32.00
One quarter of a stand	3 x 1½ ft (91.5 x 46 cm)	£ 24.00
Small presses and periodicals per title £8.00		

Publishers and Distributors needing application forms:

Contact — First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books

76 Stroud Green Road Finsbury Park London N4 3EN

Tel. Nos: 01-272 4889/579 4920/737 2268

International Book Fair Radical Black 3rd World

We, the organisers — Bogle—L'Ouverture Publications, New Beacon Books and Race Today Publications — would like to invite you to take part in the First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books, which will take place in London, Britain, at the Islington Town Hall, London N1, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday 1st to 3rd April 1982.

The organisation of this First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books is intended to mark the new and expanding phase in the growth of radical ideas and concepts and their expression in literature, politics, music, art and social life. These have burst forth from the failure of the post war settlements to satisfy peoples' urges and aspirations.

New publishing centres have emerged to express the growth of these ideas, establish their autonomy and to break the hold of the metropolitan publishing centres over them. The organisers of the Book Fair will make every effort to involve these new publishing centres both from the third world and the metropolitan countries.

The International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books will be a meeting of the continents for writers, publishers, distributors, booksellers, artists, musicians, film makers, and the people who inspire and consume their creative productions.

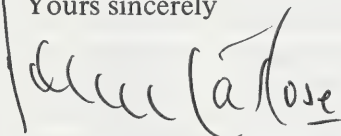
A special programme of events organised during the Book Fair week (Sunday March 28th to Saturday 3rd April) will include concerts, lectures, readings, and a forum on racist and fascist attacks on black, left wing and community booksellers and other institutions in Britain. These cultural activities will be both a backcloth and impetus for the Book Fair.

The First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books will be widely publicised among booksellers, librarians, educational institutions, and the public in both the third world and metropolitan countries.

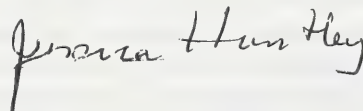
The organisers, Bogle—L'Ouverture Publications, New Beacon Books and Race Today Publications, have been pioneers in radical Black books and magazine publishing and in international bookselling over the last 15 years. On the basis of our experience, we are confident that the Book Fair will be a significant international event.

We hope you will be able to participate and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



John La Rose
Joint-Director



Jessica Huntley
Joint-Director

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'Black Beard' In Profile

By Linton Kwesi Johnson

Laying The Foundations

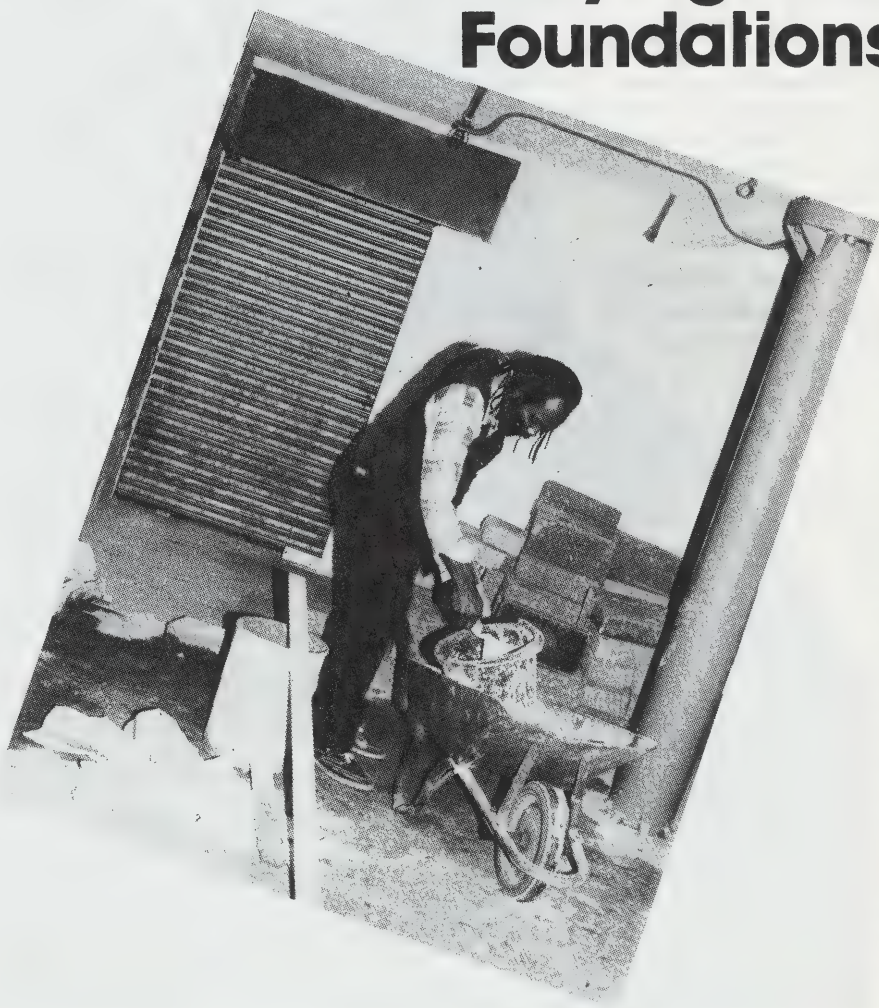
Reggae music in Britain has come a long way since the mid sixties. Then, a handful of first generation musicians made tentative attempts to copy the Jamaican sound, itself at a nascent stage of its development. The music has now moved to a more self assertive stage of 'lovers' rock' which has a large young black following. It is a distinctly British genre of the Jamaican form.

'Lovers' rock', dominated by female singers, is romantic reggae. Invariably, it combines the main conventions of laid back and uptempo rhythms with soft vocals and heart-throb lyrics, to produce a form of British pop reggae.

The process, through which we arrived at the stage of 'lovers' rock', constitutes the relatively short history of struggle to establish a viable reggae tradition in Britain.

Perhaps, the major contribution to the development of the tradition, came from Dennis 'Blackbeard' Bovell, a 28 year old Barbadian born musician, composer, arranger, vocalist, recording engineer and producer.

The first thing one notices about Bovell's contribution is its range. No other reggae artist has had such a wide range of involvement in almost every area of the creation and production of reggae in Britain.



MATUMBI

Firstly, he is a founder member of Matumbi, which, for nearly a decade, was regarded as one of Britain's top reggae bands. Bovell's considerable range of talents and knowledge of other musical forms were brought to bear on the group's development and impact on the reggae tradition. Matumbi was one of the first British based reggae bands to capture the Jamaican roots sound. They combined this with a black American style of vocal harmonies and a mixture of love and protest lyrics which produced an overall sound imbued with a British feel.

The fact that they were one of the few reggae bands around to play 'yard style' music made Matumbi one of the only bands able to back visiting solo performers like Ken Boothe, Johnnie Clarke, Pat Kelly, I Roy and others. It was Bovell who composed the music for, played on and produced the band's first hit single, 'After Tonight'. This song, and their other early hit single, 'The Man In Me', a reggae rendition of the Bob Dylan original, were the prototypes of what was later to become 'lovers' rock'. Matumbi's success gave other emerging reggae bands the confidence to create out of a British feel, while having regard for the traditional requirements of form. The band went on to win a recording contract with EMI Records. In 1980, they achieved a chart success with their Glen Miller style arrangement of an original song, 'Point of View', illustrating the versatility of reggae and its ability to incorporate other styles.

THE PRODUCER

Dennis Bovell has made his most important contributions as recording engineer, arranger and producer. He was the first recording engineer in Britain to capture the Jamaican sound on tape. This has made him the most sought after engineer in reggae circles. Bovell's engineering skill, in my view, was the single, most important factor in the transformation of British reggae. Working from Berry Street, DIP and Gooseberry studios, Bovell recorded the leading reggae artists here in Britain. He was responsible for recording the main body of home grown reggae. He recorded for most of the small independent reggae 'producers' — like Lloyd Coxone, Clem Bushay, Dennis Harris, Castro Brown, Patrick Cann and others.

In many cases, the producers and artists, who worked with Bovell, knew little about the recording process. This meant that he often had to double up as arranger/producer. He is largely responsible for the production work



on the earlier 'lovers' rock' music from artists like Brown Sugar, Fifteen, Sixteen and Seventeen, Louisa Mark, Janet Kay, Marie Pierre and many more. In fact, his production of Louisa Mark's 'Caught You in A lie' established the 'lovers' rock' style. And he recorded and arranged the first 'lovers' rock' tune to make the British top ten, Janet Kay's 'Silly Games', a classic of the genre.

Outside the 'lovers' rock' groove, Bovell produced for Jimmy Lindsay, Rico Rodriguez, Errol Dunkley, I Roy, myself and others. It was Bovell, who at a talent competition in Birmingham in 1974, discovered the band, Steel Pulse. They went on to become one of Britain's top reggae bands. He was a judge in the competition and the first prize was a recording session with him. He recorded the band's earlier material, including the celebrated 'Handsworth Revolution', later released on their debut album for Island Records. He now owns a recording studio, Studio 80, in south London.

ENGINEERING SKILLS

In the creation and production of reggae music in Jamaica, the recording engineer occupies a status similar to that of the musician, singer and dub lyricist. This is largely due to the emergence of 'dub' or drum and bass music. Here, the recording engineer, through skillful manipulation of the controls, the use

of echo, reverb, phasing and other sound effects in the mixing of the rhythm tracks, is able to lend the music an added rhythmic and illusory effect, making it particularly suited to dancing. Bovell has been able to bring dub music into the mainstream of the British reggae tradition, not only with his dub mixes for the version side of singles and twelve inch fortyfives, but also through celebrated dub albums like 'Leggo — A Fi Wi Dis', 'Who Seh Goh Deh', 'Higher Ranking Scientific Dub' and others.

DISC JOCKEY IN PRISON

Bovell's dub-making skills are linked to another chapter in his varied career — his involvement as a sound system disc jockey. He was able to make his own exclusive versions of popular rhythms on the sound system circuit. This added advantage helped to establish Sufferer's Hi Fi as one of the top sound systems around during the early seventies. They played at the Metro youth club in Notting Hill and later, other popular venues like the Carib Club in Cricklewood. During a session at the Carib Club, in 1974, the police stormed the club on the pretext that they were looking for someone. They were driven out by the revellers who later barricaded themselves inside. The police returned with reinforcements and attacked the revellers. Many were arrested that night and charged with various offences. The following

day, on hearing that the police were looking for Sufferer's DJ, Bovell presented himself at Golders Green police station. He was arrested and charged with incitement to riot and affray. Nine of the twelve defendants were acquitted. Bovell was one of three defendants on whom the jury could not agree. A retrial was ordered. He was found guilty and sentenced to three years imprisonment. He served six months in Wormwood Scrubs and was later freed after a successful appeal against conviction.

Dennis Bovell's involvement in music extends beyond the reggae tradition.

Group, The Slits, Angelic Upstarts, Garland Gefferies, Viola Wills, The Thompson Twins and others. Recently, he composed, recorded and produced most of the music in Franko Rosso's movie, *Babylon*.

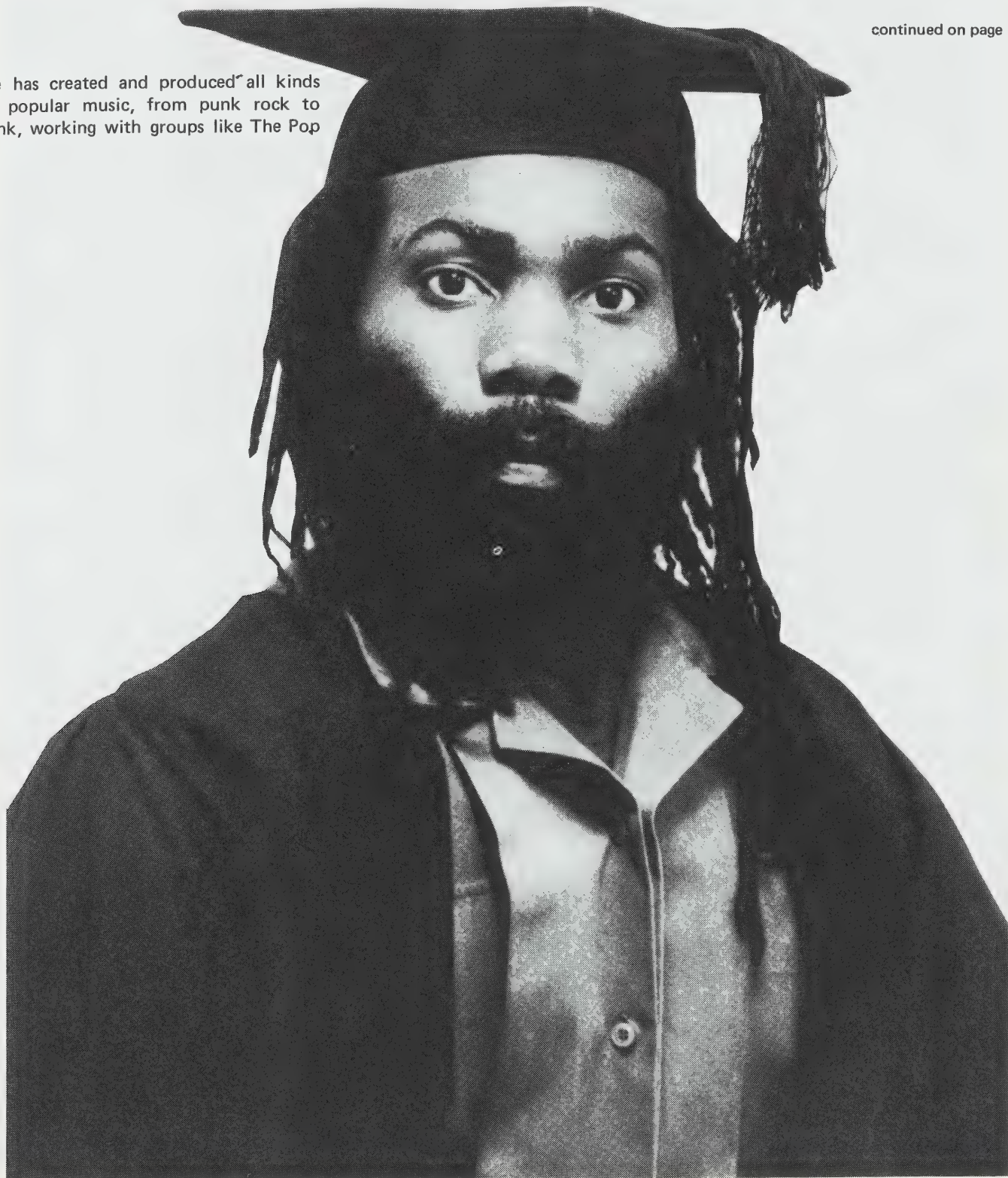
FROM THE ROOTS

He was born 28 years ago in Speights Town on the south coast of Barbados. His parents joined the army of Caribbean labour which came to Britain in the fifties and early sixties; his father went to work for London Transport as a bus driver and his mother joined the nursing profession.

The young Bovell was left in the care of his maternal grandparents. His grandparents were devout Seventh Day Adventists, and Bovell was subjected to a sheltered life with them. Though bright enough to win a free place in the local, government school, he was not particularly interested in the learning process. He was more inclined towards cricket, going to the beach and music. His inclination towards music was a family characteristic. Bovell explains: "My father is a musician; he plays the piano and was a student at the Royal College of Music. He met my mother when my grandfather was teaching him music.

continued on page 14

He has created and produced all kinds of popular music, from punk rock to funk, working with groups like The Pop



REGGAE FI RADNI

(To the memory of Walter Rodney)

yu noh si ow di cloud
dem jus come satta pan mi dream
sit upon mi dream
like a daak silk-screen
a daak silk-screen
ovah di vizshan I ad seen
di vizshan I ad seen
di vizshan I ad seen. . .

some may say dat Waltah Radni
woz a victim af hate
some wi seh dat im gaan
through heaven's gate
some wi seh dat Waltah Radni
shouldn' tek-up histri weight
an goh carry it pan im back
like im did wear im anarack

but look ow di cloud
dem just come satta pan mi dream
sit upon mi dream
like a shout ar a scream
a shout ar a scream
ar a really ugly scene
dat awake mi fram di dream
an alert mi do di scheme. . .

some may say dat Waltah Radni
woz a prizinah af fate
some wi seh dat im gaan
through di heroes gate
some wi seh dat Waltah Radni

couldn' tek histri wait
soh im tek it aaf im back
an goh put it pan im lap
an goh fall in a trap
an soh Burham get e drap

yu noh si ow mi dream
come jus get blown to smidahreen
blown to smidahreen
inna di miggie a di dream
di miggie a di dream
before di people dem come een
di people dem come een
di people dem come een. . .

some may say dat Waltah Radni
woz noh shaak fi di sea
an all dat im did want
woz fi set im people free
wid di werkaz an di pezants
im shoulda kawpahrte
but like a fish to di ook
im goh bite pan Burnham bait

but look ow mi dream
come jus get blown to smidahreen
blown to smidahreen
inna di miggie a di dream
di miggie a di dream
before di really crucial scene
di really crucial scene
wen di people dem come een. . .

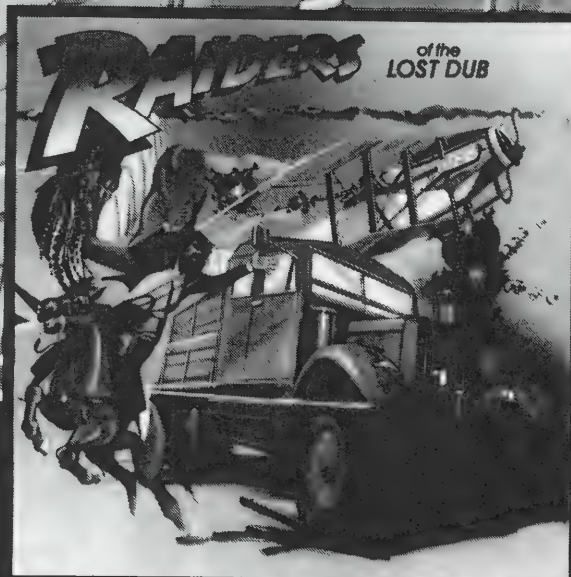
C. Linton Kwesi Johnson

ISLAND RECORDS PRESENTS

RAIDERS

of the
LOST DUB

WITH
BURNING SPEAR
BLACK UHURU
IJAHMAN
JUNIOR DELGADO
PARAGONS
THE VICROYS
WAILING SOULS



ILPS 9705



A DYNAMIC DUB COMPILATION ALBUM

He went and liked off the man daughter. My grandfather is a great musician and an elder in the church. My mother and my sisters all read music. I don't. I prefer to feel it and play it. My uncles had a vocal quartet from the church called the Walker Brothers, and they'd be on the radio on Saturday nights and sometimes on Sundays. Another of my uncles had a band called Barbara and the Originates. He introduced guitar music into the church, a very controversial thing at the time in a Seventh Day Adventist church. . ."

Bovell's first exposure to music came from the church and his immediate family circle. The only exposure to secular music was provided by a neighbour's radiogram: "In our area, we had a man on our corner named Lutha who had a very powerful radiogram. He would supply the whole neighbourhood with sounds from Friday night right back to Sunday morning, with tunes by the Mighty Sparrow and other calypsonians, the Drifters, Ray Charles and more." Bovell was a nine year old when his 15 year old uncle taught him to play the guitar. He had discovered the young Bovell messing around with his guitar. He taught him to play 'When The Saints Go Marching In', and so, Bovell's involvement with music began.

BATTERSEA IN '65

By the time he arrived in Britain in 1965 to join his parents in Battersea, South London, Bovell had obtained a rudimentary knowledge of the guitar. His arrival in Britain marked an important turning point in his musical development. He now found himself, for the first time in his life, in a completely secular environment. His father held fortnightly blues at their Battersea home, and also possessed a vast collection of records which varied from "organ recital music to African music to pop and American music". Bovell persuaded his mother to buy him a guitar, and he set about the business of developing his musical talents. The prevailing social atmosphere was marked by a striking creativity in popular music internationally. Both British and Jamaican pop were in their formative stages of development, and both took their inspiration from black American rhythm 'n' blues.

Like most second generation blacks joining the British school system at secondary school age, Bovell was placed in the lowest of the four streams at Spencer Park school. After a year, he was promoted to the B stream and came into contact with white pupils. He joined his first group, a school band of whites called Roadworks Ahead, playing English pop. He soon joined

another band consisting of black sixth-formers playing soul music. Bovell recalls: "The first gig I did with them, they put me to stand on the piano. I was the smallest fellow there and I was playing bass. So, at the age of 13, I was in two bands at the same time. On the one hand I was playing pop music with 13 year old white fellows and I was playing soul with these older black guys". This duality of involvement, with both black and white musicians, has been a constant feature of Bovell's career. He went on to play in a number of bands, playing a variety of mainly black American music, deepening his knowledge of music and developing his musicianship.

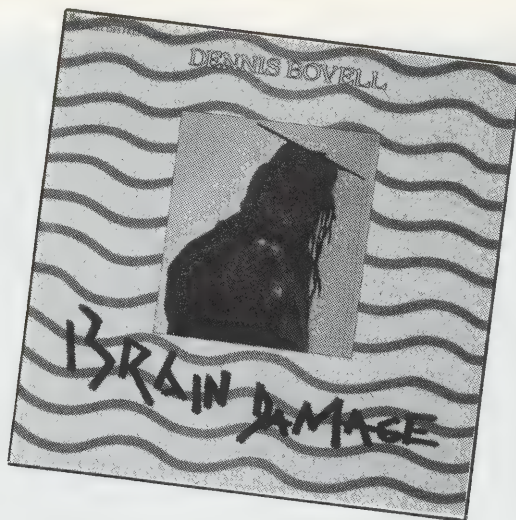
Bovell's interest in reggae came later. He was 15 when his friend's younger brother, who was well steeped in the music succeeded in initiating him. Bovell recalls: "He was younger than us and he used to go places like the Roaring Twenties, Ram Jam, Flamingo and all the clubs. He was telling us to get with it, but we were more into American music."

Bovell became a reggae fan and started hanging out with a sound system called Rocket 69. At the same time, he discovered a recording studio at school. He took over the studio and began his apprenticeship as a recording engineer: "I used to tape records and cut out the instrumental section and remake the whole tune. That's where I began to learn about engineering. I did it first with 'Young Gifted and Black' in an instrumental version, and got some teachers to play trombones on it. Jim Daddy sound system was playing in a blues dance one night in Balham, and I went and sold him my version for £3, a lot of money in them days. I also sold him a version of 'Guantanamo' on wax. We use to call these exclusive cuts wax in them days. I once dressed Marie Pierre up as a boy and took her into school and recorded a tune with her. I was recording things at school and I'd take them to R.G. Jones and cut acetates so that I could put on a

record in my house and say I made that. Later I started giving them to the sound systems".

Bovell's stock of musical experiences and his social background prepared him to make the important contributions he has made to the reggae tradition in Britain over the last decade.

Earlier this year, Phonogram released Dennis Bovell's first solo album, 'Brain Damage'. It consists of eight songs and eight dubs which reflect a wide knowledge of popular forms and influences, his diverse skills as a musician (he plays drums, bass, guitar, keyboard and percussion on most of the tracks) and his recording and mixing skills. The songs vary from roots reggae to 'lovers' rock', from rhythm 'n' blues to soca, disco and rock. It is the most daring and eclectic album ever produced by a reggae artist.



Goliath

I an I alone
A trod through creation
Babylon on I right
Babylon on I left
Babylon in front of I
An Babylon behind I
An I an I alone
In di middle
like a Goliath wid a sling-shot

Ten cent a bundle fi me calalooo

Yu a buy Calaloo dread. . . ten cent?

Everybody a try fi sell something
Everybody a try fi hustle something
Everybody a try fi grab something
Everybody a try fi kill something

But ting and ting must ring
An only a few can sing
Cause dem noh face di same something

It's a hard road to travel
An a mighty long way to go
But Jesus mi blessed saviour
Will meet me on the journey home (sing)

Shopping bag shopping bag
Five cents fi one

Green pepper thyme escallion and pimento

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy
Six days shall thou labour
But on the seventh day shall thou rest

Hi mam how much a pound fi de piece a yam de?

No, noh dat. yes dat!

Four dollars a pound nice gentleman
Clear out, oonu country people too dam tief
LIKE YU MUMMA
Fi mi mumma? wey yuh know bout mi mumma?
A MIGHT JUS CALLA YUH. . .
Yuh lie. . . a would a push dis inna yuh!. . .
Bruck it up. . . cool dung. . . but dred. . . cool dung. . . Rastafari.

The people a tek everything mek a mukkule
One a try fi hustle dung di price
Fi mek two ends meet
Di odder a try fi hustle dung di price
Fi mek dem pickney back-bone
Get sinting fi eat

But two teet meet and dem a bark
Dem caant stand de pressure
But dem mus' aspire
To sinting betta.

Caan mek blood out a stone an
Cow neva kno the use a him tail till fly tek it
But from dem born dem a fan di fly of poverty
From dem ass
For dem neva 'ave a tail fi cover it.

Watch me watch me watch me!
Hey hand-cart bwoy, mind yu lik dung mi oickney dem yuh kno!

Tief TIEF TIEF TIEF!!!
Wey im de?
Look out mek a bruk im friggin neck!!!

Im a one a di 'P' dem

Yu see it? Zackie was mi friend
But look ow im life a go end.
Party-politics play di trick
An lick im dung
Wid di big KU-KU-MAKA-STIK

An I
I an I alone a trod through creation
Babylon on mi right
Babylon on mi left
Babylon in front of I
Babylon behind I
An I an I alone inna di middle
Like a Goliath with a sling shot.

Pickney dem a bawl
Rent fi pay
Wife to obey
But only Jesus kno di way
The meek shall inherit the earth
An the fulness thereof

But look wey she inherit
She six months pregnant
Five mouths fi feed

An har man de a jail
No bail
Cho Roy man
Let mi go man
Mi no waan no man eena '81.

So what happen? It was only '80 yu was a tek man?
Cho Doris man consider this late application

Dem waan mek love pon hungry belly jus fi figet dis moment
of poverty

But she must get breed
An dem haffi go face dem calamity

Joshua say oonu fi draw oonu belt tight
Which belt when mi tripe did a come through mi mout!!
Hi sah yuh get deliver?

Wah happen yu caan answer?!

Hi lady, yu believe in socialism?
NO SAH MI BELIEVE IN SOCIAL LIVING.

Calaloo shoppin bag thyme
Dinner mints cigareetes and wriggleys
Hi Albert, which part Tiney?

Hi sah beg yuh a ten cent nuh?
Mek yuh no leave di man alone?!!

Hi sexy honey bunch sugay plum
Dog shit cow shit

I an I alone. . .

A trod through creation
Babylon on mi right
Babylon on mi left.
Babylon in front of I
Babylon behind I
An I an I alone inna di middle
like a Goliath with a sling shot.
Lawd a fine a ten cent
Jah we now get a sentence.

Carnival Review

This year's celebrations broke new ground musically in that, for the first time since this festival has been celebrated in the UK, did we have, in our midst, one of the top steelbands from Trinidad and Tobago—'Gay Desperadoes'. They travelled with Bertie Marshall, a leading pan tuner and pan innovator in steelband circles in Trinidad. In addition, Ray Holman, a fine arranger of steelband music in Trinidad, visited London for the festival.

With these technical skills and expertise available to some of our London-based steelbands, they were able to lift this year's Panorama competition to standards so far unattained in this country.

The themes chosen by the costume bands fell into two distinct categories, Africa and the Caribbean. Renegades' 'Kingdoms of the Forest', which evoked the splendour of the two medieval African states, Ife and Benin, and Lion Youth's 'White Fowl, Drum and Candle', which depicted the sounds, dance and rituals performed by ancient tribes, opted for Africa. Starlight's 'Somethings From The Garden' and Ebony's 'Typically Tropical', both depicted various aspects of the flora and fauna of the Caribbean landscape. Mangrove, in contrast, chose 'Sailors Ashore', various aspects of US naval life.

Although the masqueraders numbered less than last year, due largely to the so-called National Front's bomb scare, this did not alter the fact that the various designers and craftsmen combined produced a much improved spectacle.

The three main Carnival bodies, the Carnival and Arts Committee (CAC), the Carnival Development Committee (CDC), and the Mangrove Community Association, once again played a prominent role in the organisation of this year's festival.

The Arts Council, the government's funding agency, laid down, as a prerequisite for funding, that the CAC and the CDC form one single organisation. The CDC, unlike the CAC, which received grants from the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) (£6,000) and Greater London Council (GLC) (£3,140) fell back, as it has been doing over the last year, on its own resources as a means of assisting the organisations with their Carnival programme.

In spite of these handicaps, the organisations were able to provide the basic framework within which the thousands who attended were able to view and participate in a fine and colourful spectacle of song and dance.

by Stafford Howe



Disco - Raposo Dancin Shoes

Is wot...
From pay day to pay day
Yuh dey dey I say
Yuh dilly yuh dally up ah discoteck
Man yuh sweatin to death
Sam way
Bad girls on punky boys
Masqueradin... some paradin
Shakin up dey disco body
As dey boogie on down to de ground
an dey nah give ah damn
for dey culture

CHANT:

Yuh put on yuh dancin shoes
and yuh gone to de disco

Some say is ah craze
Some claim say is funky dey funky
disco dancin days
I know is ah big big industy
So wey cripplin de nation
is de disco connection
creatin distortion
pollutin de young generation
and yuh never give ah damn
for yuh culture

Yuh put on yuh dancin shoes
and yuh gone to de disco

See yuh like travolta
Hot wid nite fever
But when de good times are over
Yuh still scruntin
Ah see yuh in yuh glass heal shoes and ting
See yuh in yuh three piece suit an ting
Ah see yuh when yuh boogie on de uptown
swing

I see yuh like ah robot... Like ah robot
(a slave by remote control)
Yuh put on yuh dancin shoes
an yuh gone to de disco

Say yuh is de hardess
Say yuh is de bardess
And how yuh is de greatess dancer
Say way yuh want brodder
I know is mardness
I know is sadness

Cause yuh nah give ah damn
for yuh culture
Yuh put on yuh dancin shoes
an yuh gone to de disco

Till Saturday nite start shinin
On yuh Sunday mornin face
And yuh fail to take yuh rightful place
In de land wey yuh born...

Funk you.

Bro. Resistance

THEATRE



Britain's Black Theatre

By Farrukh Dhondy



The founders of the Irish Literary Movement, in the colonial Ireland of the nineteenth century, believed that a cultural movement would fertilise the political one, and give a roundness to the music of militant republicanism. A conscious and committed dramatic movement would expand the nature of the freedom Ireland was fighting for. Yeats sought to give Ireland back its myths; Synge gave lyrical voice to the community that had not staked claim to the world's attention. Together, and with others, they founded the Abbey Theatre in 1904.

In later years, looking back on the Easter rising, Yeats asks, referring to *Cathleen ni Hoolihan*:

"Did that play of mine send out
Certain men the English shot?"

a somewhat pompous uncertainty about the connection between drama and the revolutionary movement it fed? Black theatre in Britain, to date, has sent no-one out to be shot, though audiences have at times demonstrated their feeling that it would be a fitting fate for some writers and directors.

Black theatre, still in its infancy, arose from the political struggles of the black population and has consistently trailed behind its dynamic. It was, for instance, left to a white playwright to mount 'Reggae Britannia' at the Royal Court, a play which brought in enthusiastic young black audiences and explored the tensions that the 'hard' 'soft' debate in that musical world has thrown up. It was left to David Edgar, of 'Nicholas Nickleby' fame, (Dickens wrote the novel, Edgar the eight-hour stage adaptation for the Royal Shakespeare Company) to bring the labour movement view of the Asian Grunwick strike to the theatre.

No doubt there will be theatrical expositions of the Deptford Fire Bomb Massacre, and of the insurrections that wracked Britain's cities in '81. The reason one hopes that a black playwright will get in there first, rather than David

Edgar or Michael Hastings (who wrote 'Gloo Joo') is that a black playwright is today marginally answerable to the black community and feels some responsibility to the community, about whom he is writing, can be no more than ideological.

Very simply, we can define black theatre as plays and productions which deal with the experience and concerns of black people in Britain. The first generation of blacks to arrive in this country produced a few playwrights and a few actors. There was no black audience for them, and the white audiences, who were making possible the anger of the young white movement, were either indifferent or patronising towards the black actors and playwrights.

That generation of theatrical talent concerned itself with finding work in the established, theatrical tradition of Britain. Actors and actresses searched for roles they could play, and produced arguments for why they should be allowed to play, if not Hamlet or Desdemona, at least Othello and Caliban. On the margins of imaginative enterprise, directors would cast the West Indian actor as Puck in a 'Midsummer Night's Dream', or as a second Lord to swell a sequence of walk-ons. The

actors had no opportunity to ask themselves what roles they wanted to play, what black bodies on a stage ought to depict. For the few playwrights who were encouraged by establishment theatre in the early seventies, it was different. They explored the themes of black settlement in Britain and its attendant pathos, the theme of the black-white encounter in colonial territories.

The actors, actresses and playwrights of that generation carried on a tradition which the blacks of the thirties in Britain had established, the nurturing of the occasional individual talent of giants such as Paul Robeson. They gave birth to no theatrical tradition.

That task was left to the blacks of the second generation of mass settlement. Black theatre, in Britain, was the child of the youth explosion of blacks in the late sixties and early seventies. All over London, and in the ghettos of the large cities, the 'black power' movement was gathering young West Indians and a few Africans and Asians to its stance. The youth, who formed the movement saw self-exploration as one of the keys to unlock the doors of power. The movement, in its various groups, took on black studies, black history classes, discussion sessions and creative writing and drama activity, all of which sought to reflect their constant battle with the police and the authority structures in which they found themselves.

black
theatre
co-operative
present

WELCOME HOME

JACKO

by Mustapha Matura

directed by
Charlie Hanson

with
Gordon Case
Victor Evans
Trevor Laird
Alrick Riley
Maggie Shevlin
Dorrett Thompson
Chris Tummings

4-15

rivers
Crisp

Anton Phillips Lloyd Anderson Yvonne Gidden Chris

October 11 - November

AT THE KESKIDEE TR
GIFFORD ST LONDON N1
BUSES: 14 45 168 259
TUBES: KING'S CROSS

The foundations of black theatre was not their concern. With no sets, with no Arts Council grant, with hardly a director and with co-operative or collective scripting and improvisation, they made for themselves, at centres such as the Oval House in South London, the Keskidee Centre in North London and scores of youth clubs over the country, the tatty but exuberant first stages of drama as instant reflection.

The vibration reached the schools. The style of drama departments, in the inner city comprehensive, had come well away from the annual production, on speech day, of Shakespeare, to the exploration of the social, political and personal exploration of the pupil's selves. Trained in improvisation, the young actors and actresses moved to scripting plays which were more sophisticated extensions of their stark social realism of their improvisatory apprenticeships.

The continuing and intensified social revolt of their generation made space for

young black playwrights. Tunde Ikoli and Michael McMillan are two of the names that moved into that space. In the late seventies, the Royal Court, whose object it has always been to promote new playwrights, appointed Gerald Chapman as director of their Young People's Theatre Scheme. An experienced producer, Chapman unabashedly championed the causes of women's plays, gay plays, black plays, the plays written by young people who deserved production and encouragement.

The theatrical climate had changed. A section of Britain's literati, who saw theatre as social comment, were issuing open invitations to black expression. The invitation was specific. It called forth the social realists, those who would dramatise black anger and portray, with some intimacy, the dialect and character of second generation, black British. It was not talent in the abstract that was being courted. It was an invitation in which ideological dress was determined by the host. The playwrights, who answered, had to address themselves to racism. They had to substantiate, with as little naivete as possible, and as much rich characterisation as their familiarity with their own cultures gave them, the white left's contention


that racism is the black person's chief concern; that discrimination deprives blacks of jobs, that Asian women suffer from the chauvinism of their culture, that young blacks are somehow lost and that whites share in some collective guilt for the sin of colonialism. It is difficult to envisage patronage from these circles (whose influence in the semi-establishment theatre has recently grown) for a black play which says that racism is not the major problem, that the labour movement is not the answer, that the police are doing what any police force in the world would do when faced with an insurrectionary movement, that the task before blacks is to teach Britain some significant lessons about class struggle.

Audiences for the anti-racist play existed before the plays did. The playwrights rushed once more into the breach, West Indians as well as Asians. Gone are the days when the black playwright can conscientiously accuse the establishment of ignoring or debarring the black theatrical statement. On the strength of one or two plays, a black playwright can be invited to work with the most prestigious companies in the grant-aided world.

THE KESKIDEE THEATRE WORKSHOP

Throne in an autumn room

BY LENNOX BROWN



Directed by Rufus Collins Designed by Henry Multoo

HM

er II

royal court theatre

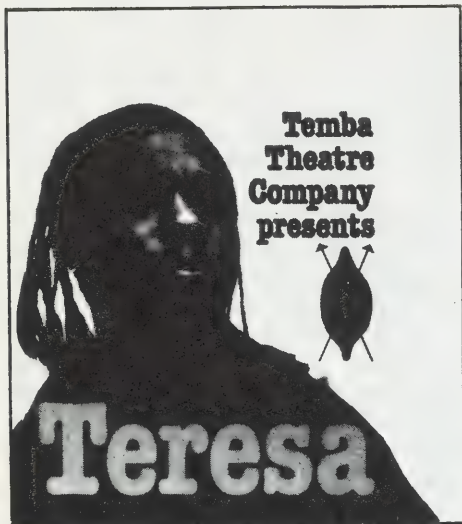
YOUNG PEOPLES THEATRE SCHEME
PRESENTS
the activists
in

HARD TIME PRESSURE

BY MICHAEL MCMILLAN and the
Avenues Club, north Paddington.



THE GARAGE
July 3-18 at
Tickets
Box



On the fringe of this world operate the black theatre companies that grew out of the determination to bring the black experience theatrically to black audiences. The Temba theatre company and the Black Theatre Co-operative have each carved out established corners for themselves. Temba has presented, at mainstream and community venues, plays from Africa and from Britain. The Black Theatre Cooperative, started by Mustafa Matura and Charlie Hanson, incorporated the talents of some of the

best young black actors of the new generation in the production of Matura's 'Welcome Home Jacko', a play which captures a moment in the lives of the black community in which a representative of the brutal age of political reality conflicts with the mythical wish-fulfilment world of young imitation rastas.

One of the black theatre's most mature playwrights, Matura, has never succumbed to the race relations format of several of his successors. His plays, almost alternately, are set in the Caribbean and in Britain. His is a talent which has won the acclaim of established critics and is in essence unideological. It contents itself with exposing energies and capturing tensions without comment on them. It has earned him, in the words of one critic, the title of dramatic journalist.

Not so the Tara Arts Company, the group of young Asian actors and actresses, who have presented to British audiences the highly idiosyncratic and 'ideological' work of the playwright Jatinder Verma. Verma writes from a determination to make white musicians feel guilty for being white. His plays are catalogues of the sins of colonialism, present and past, against the Asian races. All else, such as characterisation, plot, humour,

subtlety, are sacrificed to this purpose. It has won Tara, and him, in the words of the organisers of Asian youth festivals, the label of 'ghetto art'.

It is an undeserved label, especially from those in black theatre who see Chekhov as a 'minority' artist, and go through the intellectual contortions, fashionable ten years ago in theatre, to prove that his plays are comments on race. That kind of thing keeps black actors in work and gives them a base from which to launch the not-so-lucrative productions of black theatre. So there was something to be said for the National Theatre's 'Measure For Measure', set on a Caribbean island with an all-black cast. That it added depth to Shakespeare's conception is ludicrous. That it made demands that modern social realism doesn't make on black actors is undeniable. That it brought mixed casting in future Shakespeare productions a few steps closer is possible.

Not inevitable, only possible. If it is a fashion, the result of the idiosyncrasy of one director, it will pass. And no matter, because the new generation of black actors is vitally interested and involved in the creation of black theatre in this country as I have sought to define it. These talents in black theatre, for the most part come from the 'roots' and not from RADA. It gives them the right and the perspective to judge plays and their roles on stage from the point of view of the audiences they are trying to win. They have grown into theatre playing themselves and other

people they grew up with. They have this through the plays of Matura, of Edgar White, of Eddie Mills, of Michael Abbensetts, of Jatinder Verma, of Hanif Kureishi, of Cas Phillips and an uneasy fraternity of writers who unconsciously form a movement.

It is a movement which has felt no necessity, riding the tide of interest in blacks as they are, to extend the bounds of black theatrical expression; to move, for instance, into a current of theatre which will clarify rather than simply reflect the significance of black social action. If it is to serve the social movement from which it draws its themes, it must do more than exhibit these themes to the traditional audience of avant garde and fringe theatre, mostly white, politically effete and as far as black protest is concerned, uncritical and tamely acquiescent. It must seek to do for new audiences at least what the Irish Literary Movement sought to do. And to do it, it must break loose of the patronage of the white theatrical elite who have assisted its anti-racist phase.

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SHORT STORIES

Bobby Sands, Irish Republican political prisoner and ex MP for Fermanagh South, died in the H-Block prison on the 66th day of his hunger strike (May 5, 1981).

He was a prolific writer of short stories and poems during his term of imprisonment. His work appeared under the pen-name, Marcella, in 'An Phoblacht/Republican News', the popular, weekly journal of the Irish Liberation Movement.

He wrote on pieces of government issue toilet roll, on the rice paper of contraband cigarette roll ups, with a pen which he kept hidden inside his body.

'The Captain and the Cowards' was first published in 'An Phoblacht/Republican News' on September 19, 1981.

THE CAPTAIN AND THE COWARDS

"Shut up that bloody howling, Charlie Clarke, or I'll kick your bloody ass," heckled the Captain from his post at the grille. "And you too, Charlie Neill, you short-arsed little scamp," said he again, in his quick, gabbly voice.

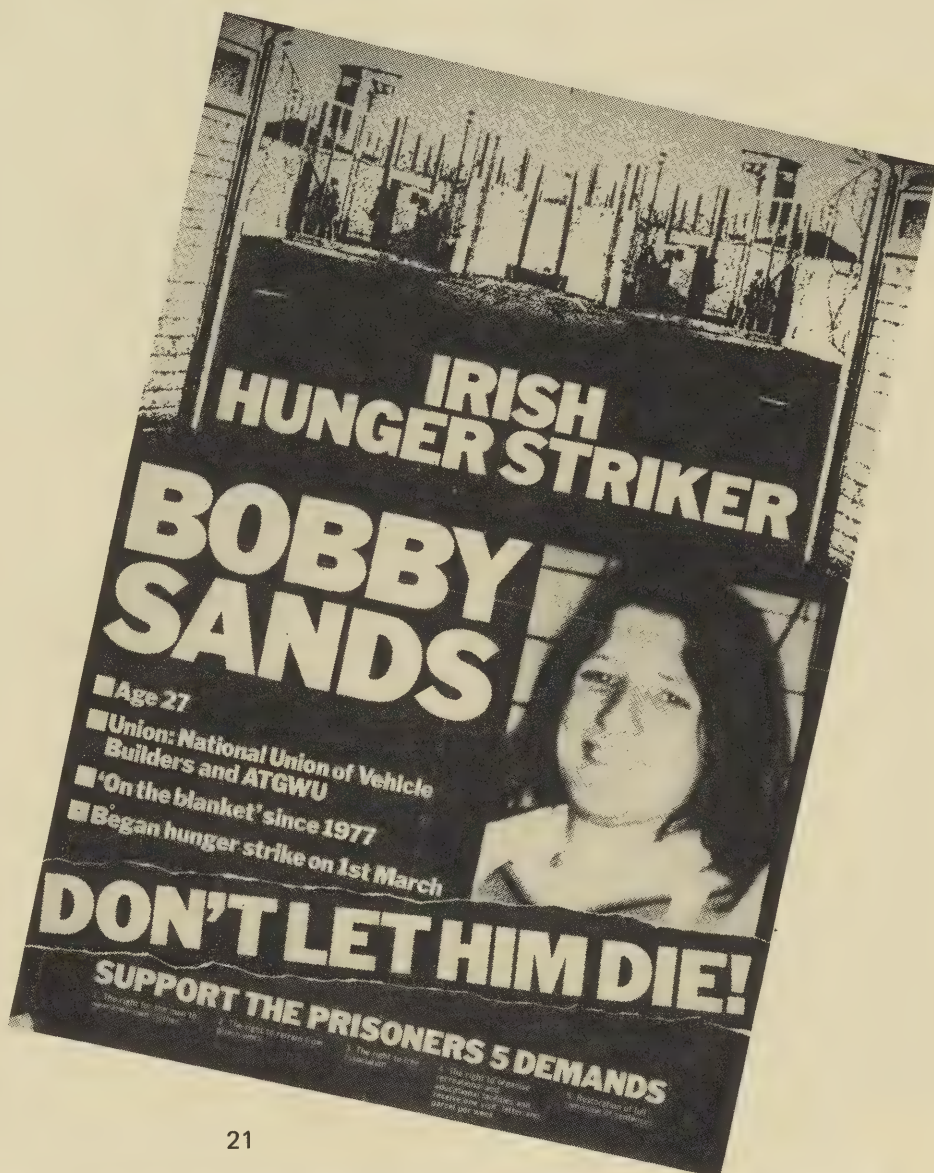
Such words were dangerously prop-
hetic within the Blocks, and once said
usually became equivalent to a primed
and ticking bomb destined to explode in
the face of some unfortunate blanket
man.

But a few muffled giggles arose from
the dark and cold tumult-like wing. It
was alright, for it was understood that it
was only the Captain, and, unperturbed,
Charlie Clarke and Charlie Neill con-
tinued to entertain the troops.

The Captain scratched his rambling,
snowy white beard and swaying precar-
iously from toe to heel, his thumbs cling-
ing to the pockets of his blue government
issue shirt, he flinched once again at the
recurring thought that here he was stuck
at this damned grille gate for the next
four hours

It would be a good day's work, he
mused, had he to open the cursed thing
that many times.

The Captain, as the boys called him,
had spent a great many of his well-accu-
mulated years on the high seas and,
although now aged, he was none the
worse for his countless windy travels. A
tall man, easily surpassing six foot, was
the Captain, and of quite heavy build,
his hair, in keeping with his beard, was
pure white, which in some curious man-
ner seemed to add an unnatural vigour to
his permanently flashing eyes.



This fact, compounded by the man's overtly raucous temperament (which included his dumb-founding ability to whip up a swift and universal string of curses), made it impossibly difficult for one to determine if, and when, the Captain was sober or stone-blind drunk.

The sea-dog, although a screw, was looked upon by the men as being 'alright', but this opinion was not held amongst his own unscrupulous work associates and in particular by the Senior Officer, 'Yellow Face' — the Captain hated him too!

1066

"1066 for a visit", called 'the Snotter'. They stuck the right name on that little pig, mused the Captain, suddenly exploding into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, coughing, spluttering and tee-heeing in comical convulsions at the very thought.

'Yellow Face', having abruptly dropped a prisoner's letter, stepped out of the office to throw a searing look towards the now almost doubled-up Captain.

"1066 for a visit", snapped 'Yellow Face'. "We haven't all day you know," he added, parting with a stare that was usually reserved for, and spent upon, the naked prisoners. The Captain pulled himself together, just catching a quick glance of the perplexed and disgusted figure of 'the Snotter'.

The men had heard the inexplicable, hilarious commotion and the Captain subsequently informing the Class Officer of the impending visit. The wing was gravely silent.

A lightning intermission had been previously called when the screws began to search several cells. All had sat intently quiet and listening, waiting apprehensively for the inevitable first signs of trouble.

But the screws withdrew to tend to their pre-visit search tasks; and in their wake the whole atmosphere seemingly exhaled in one gigantic sigh of thankful relief, while, here and there, a few, alike to sparrows in the aftermath of a storm, braved a nervous pioneering chirp.

YELLOW

'Yellow Face', in the absence of the Principal Officer, his puppet-like legs dangling a good inch off the ground, sat behind his superior's desk in the arrogant pose of a spoilt child. His entire attention and interest was captivated for some minutes by the affectionate lines of some prisoner's wife.

'Yellow Face' owed his nick-name to his strikingly prominent Japanese features and accompanying yellowish complexion which, beset by extremely gaunt cheeks and beady eyes, gave absolute permanence to a Pekinese-like sour expression. Adding to the man's bizarre appearance (totally out of proportion

and blatantly defying all the laws of physics was 'Yellow Face's famine-like physique and noticeable shortness.

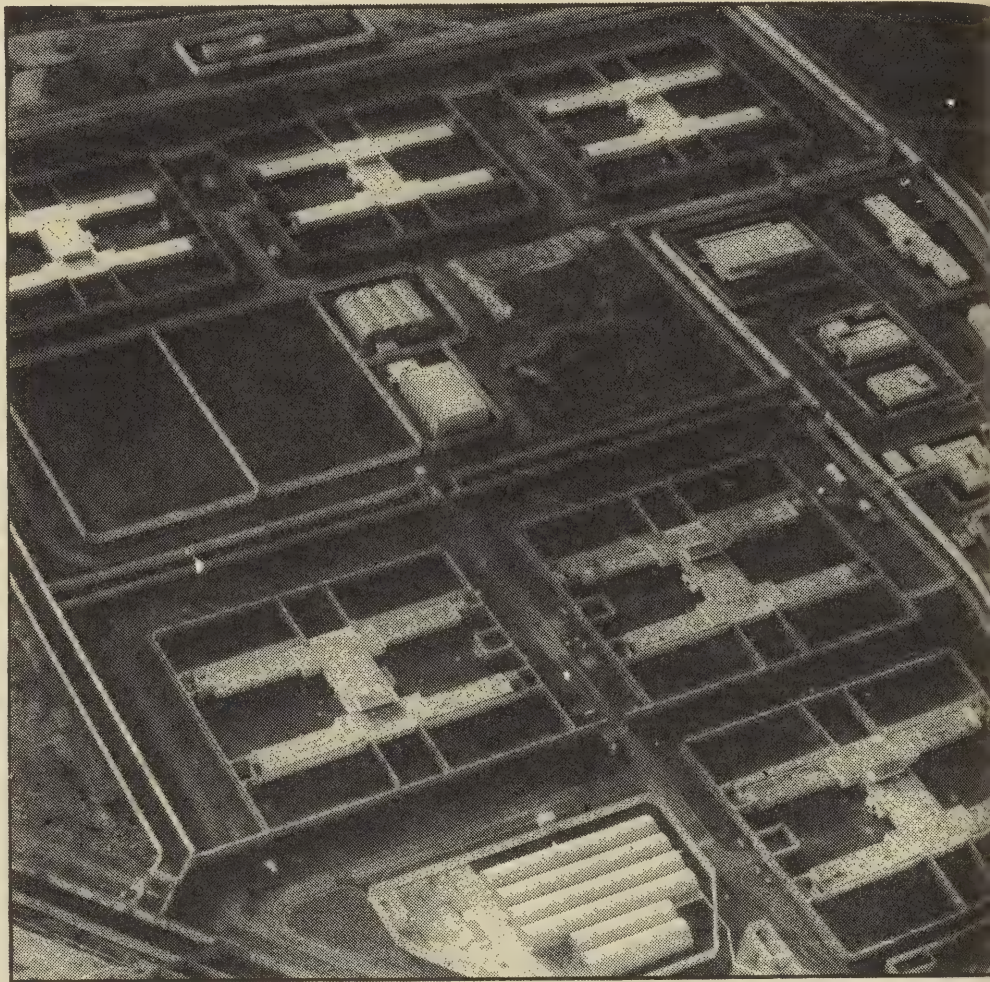
This was ridiculously enriched by over-dramatic poses and idiotic postures, with which he glided around the Block with the beauty and eloquence of a ballerina incarcerated in a frightening pair of size thirteen boots!

Among other things, 'Wee Tom', as the screws called him, was a classical

streaky voice. "Name?" he challenged, literally poking his face down the prisoner's throat while he fixed him in his provocative stare. "Date of birth?" he yelled, in humiliating and intimidatory tones.

The prisoner stood undaunted. The shabby grey uniform hung pathetically upon his half-starved body; his matted hair and tangled beard lending weight to the screws' favourite insult of 'tramp'.

"Straighten yourself up!" bawled



coward, an ardent exponent of Nazism, and an arch-bigot.

He had a well-cultured, cultivated and impeccable habit of making a complete laughing-stock of himself in front of the men and screws alike owing, of course to his foolish and egotistic inclinations. 'Wee Tom' was also an infamous torture monger!

GORILLA

The Captain had been relieved for a ten-minute break by 'Big Devlin', who, having signed out the prisoner for the visit, now stood like a great gorilla, his rapier-quick intellect ticking over at a devastating thought per hour!

The Captain was singing his head off in the washroom as 'Yellow Face' pranced out of the office to check the prisoner out.

"Right!" he snapped, in his hateful,

'Yellow Face'. flushed with anger and the looming prospect of defeat. The lad would not cower before him!

The Captain now whistling a horn-pipe, stepped out of the washroom in time to witness 'Yellow Face' strike the prisoner. The sea-dog's notes were killed by the thud as another blow found the lad's face.

The Captain was shattered and trying to catch his thoughts, when, to his utter astonishment, the lad, who was even smaller than, 'Yellow Face', clipped the Senior Officer square on the chin!

The previously-amused audience of lurking screws was instantly dumb-struck. The Captain made good the chance to slip back to his post as the shocked and dazed 'Yellow Face', retreating towards the officer, croaked, "Put him back in his cell."

VICIOUS

A vicious air of hostility engulfed every nook of the Block, the tension hung like a guillotine, for the now well-condemned prisoner's head was certainly going to roll. The men were frighteningly silent.

A few, fruitlessly, attempted to give false hope and encouragement to their badly shaken comrade as the boards' van pulled into the yard. But all knew only too well the inevitable consequences.

The Captain was not his boisterous self. He bore a sombre expression and was unnaturally tame and quiet. He didn't like the idea of beating naked men, nor for that matter the other dirty tricks that were perpetrated day in and day out. The Captain bothered no-one and no-one bothered the Captain.

That's the way to keep it sailor, steer clear of evil winds and pirates like those dirty rats, the sea-dog's nature warned.

'Yellow Face' was gathering the wolves' the old mariner noticed, and knew what to expect.

"What can an old man do?" the Captain questioned himself guiltily, thinking how he sailed the world to end up at an oppressive gate in the breaker's yard of H-Block, Long Kesh.

"Dear God", he sighed, in a now ice-cold silence. "I'm only here for the price of the rum, not like those callous knaves", he angrily but shakingly re-assured himself.

"If only I had the chance", he whispered as the clash of keys shattered the quiet. The old sea-dog watched them take the naked lad from a cell in the wing. He had better have the gate open, he thought.

PANTHER

'Yellow Face' was pacing like a panther. At all costs he must have his pound of flesh. At all costs he must redeem some of his dirty stinking pride.

The Captain felt sick. If only his ship-mates were here, he thought rather foolishly, and realising it, once again tried to pacify his throbbing conscience with what he knew to be embarrassing untruths.

The Captain was startled as a fuselage of flaying blows rained down upon the naked prey. The usual bully-boys were enjoying it thoroughly.

"Move! Move!" they yelled, their faces cramped with venom, teeth flashing and like lightning the thunder followed in deep agonising thuds! The lad bellowed in pain, his breath gushed out like a deflating balloon as he stumbled wincing in agony.

By the grille gate, knowing they'd kick him unconscious, the lad rose with awkward swiftness, a heart-wreaking grimace gripping his ghastly, white face and his eyes dancing with pure, pitiful



terror. The Captain helped him through the gate.

"Alright, Charlie Mullan?" the Captain genuinely queried in quickly babbled words.

He called all the boys 'Charlie'. Christian names held affection and familiarity. They did not mix with hate and torture; they died at the front gate of the H-Blocks.

BATTERED

The battered prisoner now lay upon the ground outside the office. The fifteen, or more black-clad screws gathered around their prey like carrion.

The Captain watched in silent anger as 'Croker' produced his heavy mahogany baton "the slimy two-faced rat", the Captain muttered in rage, knowing the man's tendency to crawl in all circles. He watched him weigh it in his right hand.

"Bastard", the Captain rasped, biting his lip, "dirty cowardly snake". He felt like screaming aloud.

'Yellow Face' led the bloody massacre and the sea-dog turned his head in dejected disgust and guilt to brave the sickening storm.

The Block was deathly silent when the Chief Officer arrived. Nothing stirred but the draughts.

The wings were like eerie morgues in which the living corpses lay upon their damp slabs on the floor. A post-execution feeling, half-guilt, half-hate, the sort a man feels in the treacherous wake of the hangman, ran riot through the stinking, smelling air, strangling the very heart and soul of every man.

They had heard every cursed, agonising sound. That was perhaps worst of all; and in their naked anger they cursed both God and Devil alike.

"Cowardly bastards," a prisoner screamed, "dirty, cowardly bastards!" There were tears on every heart-wreaking syllable.

"Cowards", the Captain echoed silently, "cold spineless cowards". The lad's first visit in two years; his people sent home in terrible anxiety, wondering what could have happened.

"Cowards!" — the Captain felt like screaming it too.

The Chief Officer came in as the Captain's stomach heaved.

"Ask the Captain. He's been at his post all day," motioned 'Yellow Face'.

"Did you see 1066 being ill-treated, Officer?" questioned the expectant Chief.

The sea-dog flushed. There was a pause, then looking towards both, his eyes flashing like cutlasses, he stammered out, "No, S...S...Sir. No. I never saw anything."

'Yellow Face's oriental features carved a sly, dirty, wry smile as he turned away, whispering "Coward," and he wiped a small red stain from the white wall.



WHEN SUGAR BELLY PLAYED

by Edgar White



Women are the eyes of the world. It was always so and will always be so. They must keep a close watch for change and crisis, for the two always seem to come as twins.

It was my first week back in Jamaica. I was just starting to fall back into the rhythm of things. It takes a while to see that it is not the rhythm of Europe or the rhythm of America which one is dealing with, but instead the slow and steady sensual rhythm of Jamaica which is unique. It takes about a week to cease to struggle. Until then, one is trying to impose a way of being which is totally out of synch with everything else. It's very much like forcing the rhythm of your lovemaking upon a woman instead of following her and merely rising and falling according to her needs.

The simple fact of life is that if you attempt to move about in that intense Jamaican heat, as if you were in London or New York, you will surely drop quite dead. Africa is much the same.

As I say, I was just beginning to lose my sense of urgency. Morning is the time for taking care of business (as most shops close early). By noon you take the shelter where you can find it. You have your second bath of the day (if you're lucky).

By around two o'clock the Trade Winds begin to enter slowly and mysteriously. It can be a much welcome and calming breeze if you know that it is coming. If however you're young, foolish or a strange visitor, then you do not expect it and could quite easily be swept out to sea by the tide. It was on these self-same Trade Winds which Columbus came to discover (or misdiscover) the Caribbean or 'West Indies'.

I enjoy a nice siesta from two until four o'clock. Dress in clean shirt and deal with the afternoon. If you're lucky enough to have money, you could buy some nice crab with hot pepper sauce down by the beach. The women sell them and tell you that it's 'hot like first love me dear, so watch good'.

I prefer fish to curry goat because the fish had more wisdom than the goat, although both of them were caught the same way.

Evening is nice because it too brings a breeze. If no breeze comes, then you know that rain will soon come. Rain can be cruel in the Caribbean if you are outdoors, or it can be nice if you're inside making love.

It was just past six o'clock when I walked along the path which I used for a short cut. In Jamaica they call these paths 'Back-a-yard'. This is the area behind the nice government-built structure called units for living.

The poor always seem to live in running distance from the rich. It is possible to walk along the main streets of Kingston and never know that within a five minute walk away there is a quickly improvised ghetto of squatters. These people simply find a space (a barren field, say) and proceed to 'live'. The rich grumble. They murmur. They call police and write various officials. The poor still come and continue to live. If somehow they are forced out, they merely relocate within another five minute radius.

So I walk through this field and watch the eyes which are always watching you. I listen to music blasting from the zinc shelters they call yards. I watch the young girls who, at the age of twelve, are already full women and have eyes which challenge you into silence.

I saw the young boys sitting on their improvised chairs which were made simply by taking a coca-cola (the ubiquitous Coke) bottle and sticking the mouth of the bottle into the mud and sitting. Here they sat quite comfortably and played dominoes or read from their bibles because many of them were Rastafarian.

If you like rum then the Caribbean is the place to be. If you like white-rum then Jamaica is the place to be. I had a great love for good white-rum. There is always a rum-shop (a shebeen) within walking distance. Here the men gather to drink and talk politics, exchange lies about various women they supposedly conquered, and forget the day's labour or absolute lack of it.

There was an election coming and Manley was, once more appealing to the poor vote. Evening is the best time to drink white-rum. Slowly, like everything one does on the island.

When night fell, I dressed again and joined a friend who had that magic item: a car. We then made the rounds of several clubs and one in particular



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was saved for last. It was one of these very secret establishments they call 'House of Joy', a brothel. Here you could sit at your leisure and select one or several women according to your pleasure and the state of your finances.

Now in this club, (into which one gained access only through a member), there were not only women and porno-films to encourage you. There was also live music. And what music. Here, amid all this artificial garbage, was an old saxophone player named Sugar-Belly. The man had a big pot belly surely, and greying hair, but a tone so sweet and sad that they knew immediately why they called him Sugar-Belly.

Now music is a funny thing. Although people say they love it, yet, secretly, they fear it. I think it had to do with

the fact that music has a way of reaching places where not even hands can enter. It can violate and comfort as no human can. And so, there is no place left to hide. Music affects women more than men.

Music can bring back memories of history which were supposedly long forgotten. Perhaps that is why in Trinidad they won't play Calypso on the radio stations, preferring instead to play American Funk. Anyway, Sugar-Belly played his horn and walked about the club looking from half-closed eyes into the faces of various couples. If you liked what he played then you would offer to buy him a drink; if you didn't then you became more involved in the women and the alcohol.

I sat and listened. I heard the crying of slaves. I heard the slow moaning of

women in the night. I heard the cries of the Gospel Church. The women there seemed to hear it too.

The main function of the women was to try and make the men buy drinks. The more money the customers spent on drinks the more happy the management. When the combination of drink and women was too strong for mortal man, there was always a little room which could be purchased for an hour.

The girl I chose was the youngest in the club. Others had chosen me, but I was not interested so much in experience. None of them had the eyes I was looking for except one. Her name was Cathy. She tried very hard to get me to keep buying drinks. She, however drank very little. I obliged her, I did not want to make her life difficult.



She was a good girl who tried very hard to make you think she was happy and enjoyed her work. You see one does not spend money in a brothel to meet a girl as sad as one's own wife. But it was her eyes which gave her away. Every few minutes one could tell that she was really a million light years away from both the place and the man she was dealing with. I sat and would let her drift for a while and wait for her to return. I could see that Sugar-Belly's horn would catch her and carry her backward into her own consciousness. Finally, after the fifth round of drinks she asked me if I wouldn't like to use a room for a while. It shook her when I told her that I didn't want a room but instead wanted her to come home with me when she finished work. It took her some time before she believed me enough. I told her that I didn't like tiny rooms with a fan which doesn't work and a grubby wash-basin to clean up afterward.

It was about three o'clock when we finally left together. My friend dropped us home, and she liked the respectability of a good car. Outside the Kingston dogs were howling as they do every night, locked in their yards and calling out from history.

Cathy came inside and watched me from those eyes again which at eighteen were full of mistrust and experience. She got undressed slowly; she sensed that I didn't want to rush. She wore dark panties and bra, as much for the customers as the fact that she had to dress and undress repeatedly. But it was the smoothness of the skin. Skin which felt like palm oil. Skin such as only the sun can make.

She came into my arms and started some slow and encouraging moans, and then a few quick spasms such as many women use to trick men into believing that they are really feeling. The male ego is so easily fooled. When I started to laugh she stopped. I told her that I would rather talk to her. She asked me if there was something wrong with me. Probably, I said. But I just wanted to lie there with her for a while and find out how she saw the world. Strangely, this to her was much more dangerous. This meant perhaps exposing herself. It took a long time before she opened up. I had to start first telling her about the things which annoyed or frightened me and the things which I felt. Only when she saw that I was really interested did she start.

She was eighteen (certainly no older than). She worked, not only in the club at night, but also as a domestic three times a week during the day. She had a child. She had wanted to be a nurse and still hoped to. More than anything else she wanted to leave Jamaica where she felt life was hopeless for the poor. The people were too gossiping and jealous. She wanted to come to England or the States. The Madam who ran the club had a kind of psychic control over the girls who worked there. She promised to help them obtain the all precious immigration papers. The club was a sort of microcosm of the island society. The East Indian girls were paid more than the Blacks. The white girl who worked there was paid most of all, as she seemed to be the most sought after. The fact that most whites in the Caribbean are mostly rejects of the European world doesn't matter.

Yes, there was an election coming, and whichever party came to power

didn't matter because Cathy would still continue to work the two jobs.

There would still be the same number of men coming in every night, and the price of food would go in one direction

And so the dawn came on and we made a little love, not too much, because she was tired after working a sixteen or eighteen hour day. And I watched her sleep in my arms because only then could she be completely honest. She could just fall safely . . . And she slept the way women are sleeping in Liberia or Nigeria or Sierra Leone. Because as Cathy said, whichever party came to power it would affect nothing. It will always be 'business as usual', and those who are not lucky enough to have money in Swiss bank accounts must 'earn' their immigration papers. And the babies will still be hungry if they do not eat.

As I say women are the eyes of the world. And somewhere Sugar-Belly's horn plays history softly.





BOOK REVIEWS

A View Of The Polish Political Crisis

SOLIDARITY by Dennis MacShane

Published by Spokesman Books

Price £3.50

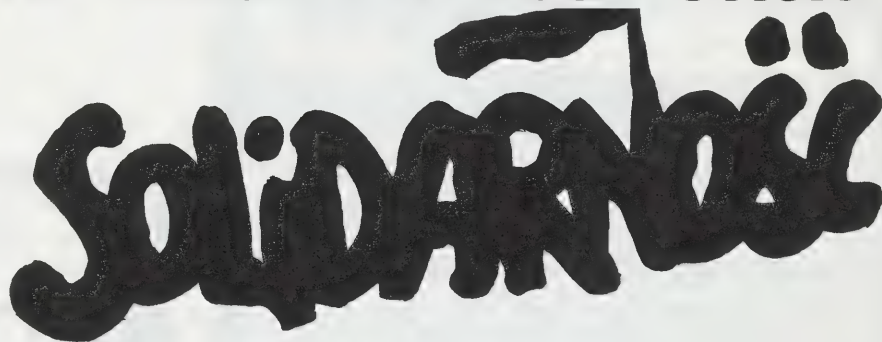
THE ALTERNATIVE IN EASTERN

EUROPE by Rudolph Bahro

Published by New Left Books

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Reviewed by Dave Feickert



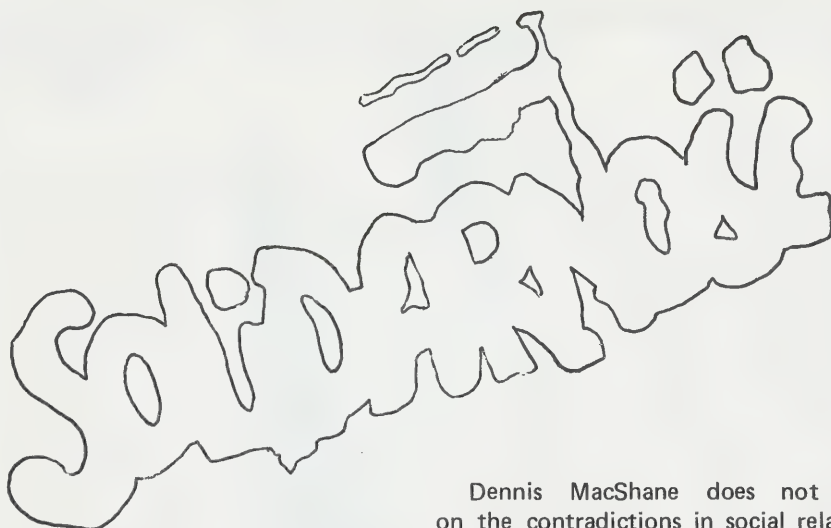
In one short year of its existence, NSZZ Solidarność has helped to turn a very large part of the world upside down. The overwhelming majority of Polish workers are represented in the 10 million strong trade union, making it the largest single working class organisation in Europe. NSZZ are initials in Polish which stand for 'independent, self-governing trade union', and indeed Solidarity is just that, a fully autonomous workers' organisation which is autonomous from the state in a way few other trade unions are, either in the East or the West.

Dennis MacShane, in his very readable account of Solidarity's short history, correctly locates the real birth of the movement not just a year ago, but rather in the tremendous struggles of Polish workers right through the post-war period. 1956, 1970, 1976 are some of the dates around which this struggle turned.

And while there are few workers of other nationalities or races in Poland, there was a massive migration of peasants to the new, industrial towns created in the postwar period. Lech Walesa, himself of rural origin, is one authentic voice in the European internal and external immigration that took southern Italian peasants to northern Fiat factories; Turks, Portuguese and Yugoslavs to West Germany; Arabs and Africans to France and West Indian and Asian workers to British factories. Polish migrant workers were thrown into an industrialisation without parallel in Eastern Europe, and from their labour was extracted the highest rate of surplus value of any country in the Eastern Bloc except for Mongolia. The 1970's saw a massive investment of Western

technology in Poland, which not only firmly bound the Polish economy into the Western banking system, (to the tune of \$27 billion) but also sharpened all those contradictions maturing inside the Polish factories.

But unlike their counterparts elsewhere, Polish migrant workers were to have their labour time organised by a *Communist* government rather than a capitalist one. And perhaps the most important fact about Solidarity is that its fight for freedom has, once and for all, emptied out the illusion of the essential difference between Eastern and Western regimes. At a stroke it has laid waste that anti-communism which has been used to keep Western workers in line. We can now say, unequivocally, that we want what Solidarity wants.



There may be differences between East and West, but there is no essential difference. This reality emerges most clearly around the very question of labour time.

In October, a few days before General Jaruzelski replaced Kania as leader of the Polish Communist Party, Kania had declared that the newly-won free Saturdays must come to an end. As with capitalist governments from North to South the chorus is the same — "the economy cannot afford shorter hours".

Dennis MacShane does not take on the contradictions in social relations that exist inside the countries of *actually existing socialism*; but then his book, more of an extended piece of journalism than thorough-going political analysis, does not set out to do this. As a piece of journalism, produced under the time constraints under which journalists work, it is the best account of the growing number available.

For political analysis we must turn to Rudolph Bahro, an East German Marxist, now active in the Green Party in West Germany, where he was sent into exile in 1980. In 'The Alternative in

Eastern Europe', Rudolf Bahro argues that real communism is now an actual possibility, while that which presently exists bears no resemblance to the real thing. As communists must, he tackles the question of time as the link between the present and the future: "What would take pride of place in planning is a new economy of time. This is the economy of time which Marx had in mind for the realm of freedom: the deliberate allotment of time for allround development and satisfaction on a social as well as an individual scale." This is not only a shortening of the working day, but a complete change in the nature of work by eliminating what Bahro calls

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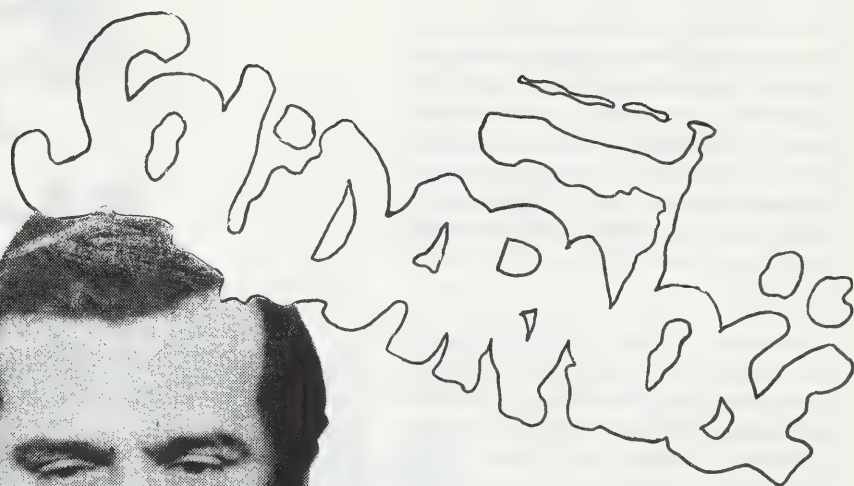
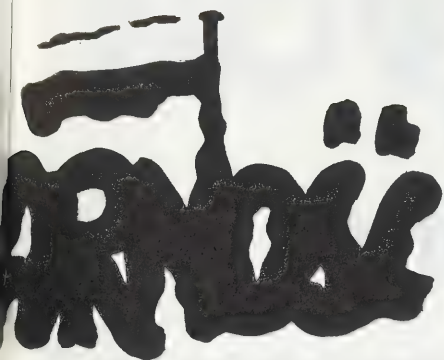
A JOURNAL OF THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT

C.L.R. JAMES: His Life & Work

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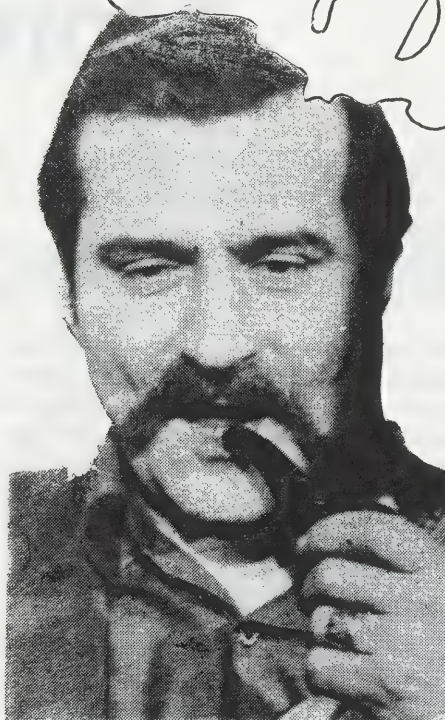
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"psychologically unproductive labour", or that labour which does not help people develop their "rich individuality".

The move to communism, Bahro argued in 1976, could only take place in Eastern Europe if the whole mass of the population moved against the state. In 1980 this is what happened in Poland with the birth of Solidarity. This was the first time a rebellion on this scale has got underway in Eastern Europe.

Solidarity's demands compare very closely with some of those outlined by Bahro — a vast increase in free disposable time (Solidarity is unique among



world trade unions in having won huge reductions in working hours), an abolition of privileges of Party and state functionaries. Other parts of the programme of cultural revolution outlined by Bahro can only be implemented during and after a struggle for power. Solidarity is in no position to do this without the help of workers elsewhere. While the Polish trade unionists recognise the pivotal geopolitical position of their country, they realise they cannot go the whole way alone.

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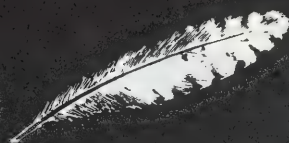
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However, MacShane accurately summarises Solidarity's main achievements:

"The creation of independent trade unions, a major wage increase, improvements in family allowances and pensions, a substantial reduction in working time, release of political prisoners, increased access to the media, reinstatement of victimised workers — all of these amount to gains which any trade union anywhere in the world would be proud to boast of."

Solidarity is not a political party, it is a trade union and it is no more a *Communist* trade union than its British counterparts. We can hardly be surprised if Solidarity delegates to a French socialist trade union conference (the CFTD) look dismayed when the Internationale was played; for as MacShane points out, for them it is the Russian National Anthem more than a song of the international working class.

As with British trade union members, Solidarity members are not *Communists* but neither are they *Social Democrats* or *Conservatives* — rather, they, like ourselves, are working class militants who are vigorously taking up the key class questions of the day, and are pressing their demands in struggles organised by a democratic workers' union. Furthermore, it is a union unhindered by pre-occupations with craft or other occupational divisions, but one which, as MacShane records, works on an elected delegate basis from workplace to region, to national co-ordinating commission — all with the right of recall at any time.

On visiting Solidarity offices, as I did myself this summer, two features are immediately apparent: first, the offices are crowded with industrial workers in overalls, and second, crucifixes and portraits of Pope John Paul, the Polish Pope, abound. The relationship of religion to Solidarity cannot be explained only by references to the role of the Catholic Church in Polish national identity, or the fact of the Polish Pope, as MacShane does. Something much deeper is at work. Perhaps Bahro is not so far off when he comments: "... the tradition that appeals to Christ's Sermon on the Mount is an indispensable ally, in so far as it does not enclose itself within the Church. A genuine competition for spiritual influence on society, not spoiled by power-political aims, can only arouse Marxism as a living force, and help it to rise above its primitive catechisms."

NSZZ Solidarnosc — Independent and self-governing — is enclosed in neither the State nor the Church..

Racism And Morality

A SAVAGE CULTURE: Racism —A Black British View by Remi Kapo

Published by Quartet Books

Price £2.50

Reviewed by Natasha Sivanandan

'A Savage Culture' is a rather piecemeal overview of British racism. The author looks at British racism today, traces its roots back to the days of slavery and empire and examines the consequences of British indifference to its oppression of black people everywhere, past and present.

The book suffers from two major and related faults: a lack of theoretical clarity and an unclear style. Kapo's starting point, both in his analysis of and response to British racism, is largely humanitarian. He views racism as a question of morality. He writes in his preface: "The principle forming the basis for belief in Human Rights is the single most important ideal for mankind, universally. It is in this ideal I believe."

This is precisely his and the book's weakness. In looking at British racism within the western, liberal context of human rights, Kapo fails to analyse racism as having purpose only for exploitation. It is not a thing in itself and for itself. By ignoring the economic context, Kapo fails to link its cultural or ideological aspects to its economic roots.

As a consequence, Kapo's book lacks cohesion. For example, he appears to attribute an "empire mentality" to the thinking behind the Immigration Acts, rather than looking at the economic and political climate which has determined post-war immigration legislation. Another example of Kapo's confused thinking can be seen in his comments on the British police force. After quoting at length from a highly dubious passage by Bertrand Russell on the psychology of power, Kapo writes, "consequently, it is inherent in the act of joining a police force that an individual, consciously or subconsciously, seeks a larger slice of the local power-cake." It would, of course, be more useful to look at the police in terms of the socio-economic and political function

they have within a capitalist, class-ridden, society.

False analyses, however, lead to false solutions. If racism is a savage culture, then this implies that cultural change, (as opposed to changes in the economic and political structure of society), could eradicate it. Kapo's solution to white racism appears to be a rethinking on the part of white people: "Timing racial politics requires inspiration, and moral courage to carry out an equitable solution". Hence, Kapo has nothing to say about the present and possible future relationship between white and black working class struggles in Britain. He tells us nothing about the relationship between race and class in this society.

Equally, Kapo's style lacks clarity. His writing is pseudo-poetical and often vaguely philosophical. At times it is very difficult to follow. For example, he writes: "Anyone who cares enough can see that white British injustice only creates a quivering and latent potential for rebellion in black and Asian people. In another sense, life is a mixture of secure insecurities, but security must be the larger elements, being the very essence for internal stability. Black and Asian stability is assured by their situation." (Perhaps one requires a Sociology degree to understand this!)

Kapo's book is a rambling, impressionistic and limited view of a complex historical process. He does, however, include some very interesting quotes by other writers in it, especially in the early chapters.

I doubt that the book will be read by many black people. It may reach the shelves of a white, middle class or academic audience. When it does so, the problem is, does the book reflect accurately and forcibly the black experience of British racism? Unfortunately, Kapo's book reflects his own class position rather than the position and experiences of most black people in Britain today.

NOVELS

Getting Out Of The Kumibla

JANE AND LOUISA WILL SOON

COME HOME by Erna Brodber

Published by New Beacon Books

Price £2.95

Reviewed by Rhonda Cobham

This short first novel is probably the most exciting piece of prose fiction by a West Indian author to appear in recent years. Its basic theme of alienation and historical trauma have been developed by other West Indian novelists: by George Lamming, for example, in 'In the Castle of My Skin', or Gareth St. Omer in 'Nor Any Country', or V.S. Naipaul in 'The Mimic Men'. What distinguishes Brodber's treatment of these themes is that she approaches them through the consciousness of a female protagonist. In addition, rather than ending with the central figure's movement into lonely wisdom, despair or further alienation, the author is able to suggest possibilities of spiritual renewal and social reintegration.

The novel's structure reinforces this movement toward reintegration. The work is divided into four sections, each of which takes its title from a line in the West Indian/colonial ring game 'Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home'. The first section, 'My Dear Will You Allow Me', consists of disjointed fragments related as if snatched from overheard conversations. Most of the passages refer to partially understood events encountered during childhood, but some of the themes and relationships developed later in the narrative are also anticipated. In the second section, 'To Waltz With You', the life story of the main character, Nellie, begins to emerge more clearly. We follow her through her studies in the West Indies and abroad and share her frustration and insecurity as she tries to come to terms with the society and her own sexuality on her return to Jamaica. Her inability to connect finally leads to total psychic collapse. Out of this desolation she is



rescued by Baba, an old childhood friend who has become a Rastafarian, and she is nursed back to life through healing contacts with the lower-class yard community she had formerly sought to "improve".

At this point, instead of pressing forward to successful resolution — conversion, revolution, or happy marriage — the novel tacks back to the fragments introduced in the opening movement. Slowly, Nellie begins to piece together her family history. The reader, who until now has probably been as confused as the central character by the jumble of sensations and experiences recorded in the novel, is able to share Nellie's sense of discovery, and the feeling that, after all, a coherent pattern of forces have contributed to Nellie's alienation. Central to the two last sections of the novel — and indeed to the entire work — is the idea of the kumbla. The phrase "Go eena kumbla" come from a folk story in which Anancy tricks the Sea King into letting him go free by pretending to sacrifice his children to the king. In fact it is Anancy's only son, Tucuma, who is presented to the king over and over in various disguises which he assumes whenever Anancy tells him to "Go eena kumbla". The Sea King takes this phrase to be a parting curse, but Tucuma understands it as a

secret code. Finally Anancy produces the "real" Tucuma who is allowed to accompany his father back to land.

Using the idea of the kumbla, the author examines the disfiguring/protective devices used over the years by West Indian women to ensure the survival of their children or the progress of the race. At one extreme is Tia Maria, the black mistress of a white tobacco farmer, who wills her own disappearance from the family records to ensure the success of her mulatto children. At the other extreme is her grandchild, Nellie's Aunt Becca, who aborts her unborn child to save herself for marriage and respectability. Nellie's own kumbla of sexual inhibition and social exclusivity, which has ensured intellectual achievement and social position, is now seen as yet another immunising device that offers security, but ultimately maims whole areas of the personality, perpetuating the cycle of oppression/escape/alienation that first made such kumblas necessary. The book ends with Nellie taking leave of the past, understanding, without bitterness, the reasons for her ancestors' limitations, but preparing to free herself from her own kumbla and looking forward to the time when the society as a whole will be able to throw off such disfiguring/protective devices. This idea is summed up in a pro-

verb addressed to the ancestral spirits:

Massa Nega, beg you mine yourself.
Mi smell you dinner but mi no want none.

What makes Erna Brodber's novel so effective is the depth of feeling which the author brings to her narrative and the powerful language and imagery through which she evokes Nellie's experiences. Folk tales, the story of Anancy and the kumbla, proverbs and nursery rhymes are interwoven with motifs from 'Alice in Wonderland' and refrains from old-time calypsos, creating a dreamlike pattern of interlocking imagery well suited to the theme of awakening consciousness which the narrative develops. Like many first novels 'Jane and Louisa' is clearly autobiographical in matters of detail, and one gets the feeling that it is the result of the author's own painful movement out of the kumbla of material success and personal inhibitions that contains so many West Indian women. In the process, Erna Brodber has achieved a fictional resolution of the contradictions inherent in the figure of the all-powerful West Indian matriarch that does not negate the heroism of such women or the potential destructiveness of their strength.

A Racy Thriller

East Wind In Paradise

by Carl Jackson

Published by New Beacon Books

Price £2.95

Reviewed by Leslee Wills

Shannon Edge is chosen as undercover agent for a Caribbean island government under threat. The novel opens with a macabre knife scene in a bar, and goes on to feature Edge in a much more violent, night-time fray on the beach. Edge manages to link the men on the beach to a group operating under the name Columbus club. It emerges that the club is a front for the circumspect activities of local, influential figures. They are involved in no less than a plot to remove the Prime Minister.

'East Wind in Paradise' confirms the inevitable relationships between politics and the criminal element in the small societies of the Caribbean.

It hovers somewhere between the Peter Cheyney and Mickey Spillane sharp-shooting, super-cool, undercover/agent/thriller styles. The author, Carl Jackson, translates this genre very brilliantly to Barbados with its tourist/expatriate, dominate culture.

Edge, the main character, is much the 'secret agent' operating within the beach-scene and tourist round-a-bout of Barbados. He drinks rum and coconut water, invariably seduces the women he en-

counters and executes 11th hour reprieves or reprisals. He is a picaresque figure, emerging unscathed from a build up of dangerous and violent episodes, always very graphically described.



Edge's scenarios are not confined to Barbados, but also to Spain, Africa and Europe. He is a player on the international stage. Through him, Carl Jackson presents the Caribbean as a microcosm of the world political arena.

The author is witty and comfortably colloquial throughout. His writing is terse at times and powerfully descriptive at others. For example, when he describes the local gigolos and tourist women:

"Young black studs moved among them with bulging thighs and flashing teeth, loose-jointed, hip-spinning, young turks prancing and whirling like stallions in a horse-herd."

In keeping with the tone of this type of thriller, the language is often slick and catchy for its own sake. Edge's 'rap': "... keep the cane juice cool until I see you again;" the title itself, 'East Wind in Paradise,' and again the brief, melodramatic chapter headings like 'Hydro foil Cowboy' and 'Body Heat' characterise the sharp-shooting, rapidly changing pace of the action.

Arguably, the author finds himself bound within an inherently sexist tradition, hence the imagery is often uncompromisingly so. Edge likens a housing estate to "pus running down a good-looking leg". Elsewhere a woman is likened to "a cow waiting for the milking machine".

The women in 'East Wind in Paradise' conform exactly to those categories found in specifically male-dominated genre. They are mostly accessible, subordinate or tiresome. They are always glamorous. They are personified in Edge's high-powered rifle brand name, Erma; potential threats, ultimately to be harnessed to his advantage.

It is evident that the writer wavers between identification with Edge and another character, Prometheus X, a figure he describes as "half-mad-man half-martyr". X is the local marxist, black power, rabble rousing figure intended, for the purposes of the plot, to be the fall guy. However, he is respected and admired by even his protagonist, Edge. So we have a hero/victim proper in Edge (for he uncovers villainy and eventually succumbs to a woman) with Prometheus X emerging as anti-hero and real victim of the politics of the region.

There is a very cynical treatment of the Barbadian tourist culture. It is often exposed as fake and plastic in the novel.

Jackson understands the devices that constitute a good thriller — the delayed climaxes, the twists. He knows, firsthand, the small-island society where politician and criminal could conceivably share the same classroom in their youth. This novel is racy, non-stop reading.

Who Go Stop Dem?

Now dat dem plan
Fa tear-up my book
An' tek way my pen
Carry me in police station
fa "questioning"
Who go stop dem?
If dem can
Ban
De Brandford-boy from de
House-Of-Assembly
An' don't let MONALI
Come pun T.V.
Then tell me
Who go stop dem?

Now dat Sylverton Small
Get trip-fall
And Pele
Get pass-way
As I would say
Who go stop dem?
When one day
Dem tek Elombe
Outta the News department
An' loss he way in some
Dismal compartment
An' CARIFESTA
An' Culture
In a 'predicament'
Who go stop dem?

Now dat imperialism say
Isolate Cuba,
Get rid of Grenada,
No more Nicaragua
Or no Aid for ya
Who go stop dem?
An' if down-through the Caribbean
De Trinidad Dollar en worth nothing
An' all 'bout here
Is de U.S. dollar
Wuh carry de sway
Who go stop dem?

Now dat de tourist-man
Slow fa come
An' too much Arson-cane
Get bu'n down
Who go stop dem?
An' why if sugar mekking here
De price still so blasted dear
An' no time a-tall man check shop-shelf
Wid a ten dollar bill man can't feed heself
Who go stop dem?

Since savings soar
An' so many ah de poor
Getting toss in de streets
More and more. . .
Who go stop dem?
An' since Sandhurst strongman
Control Defense Division
Tek-up Machine gun
Fe fire-fighting Mission
Soldiers crawl pun BatsRock Sand
Who in dis place can tell I-man
Who go stop dem?

Now dat de Grand-Daddy
Of de Union
Get tired an old
An' dem know full well
Who de hell
Go 'man-trol'
Who go stop dem?
When you stop and see
How we own B.M.C.
Push Ann-Page products
Pun we T.V.
An' de farmers feel
Dat not I-rie
Who go stop dem?

Now if every year
All through this region
C.I.A. connection publication
Rant and Rove and carry on
'Bout how you have de
Freest Nation. . .
An' de people done
Sight-up de plan
Fe set-up "Subversive Bureau"
In the Island
Who go stop dem?
Now that so much money
In a few families hands
An' de rich foreigners
Buy up all de lands
De one-armed bandits
In big demand
Cinema and television
Set de standards for Bajan-Man
Who go stop dem?
Tell I-Man
Who go stop dem?

C. Mi-kul Rashid Fosta

Is So Some Bajans Think

Tell me say why
No matter how man try
Him can still look an' see
After dem teach all de History
On de high-hill campus of U.W.I.
Dat de Brother Kamau Brathwaite
George Lamming & Tom Clarke
Still live in exile
From dem own country
And not a word from anybody
Cause is so some bajans think
True thing that
Is so how dem think
Stink
Is so some bajans think

Now when Man sight
How at a posh party one night
Dem plan
To push a big-belly man
Outta de Ministry o' Sport
An' put he in de Ministry o' Culture . . .
An' dem intend that action
To be deemed a demotion
Then you see why dem need
Culture promotion
Cause is so some bajans think
True thing that
Is so how dem think
Stink
Is so some bajans think

Man just-a 'heights'
Hold he belly and bawl
At how dem doan check
Fe de Rain a-tall
Dem plan open-air function
In de middle of the hurricane season
It so easy to perceive
How easy dem believe
Every word the tourist brochure say
Dat in Barbados de sun does shine
For every day of de year.
But is so some bajans think
True thing that
Is so how dem think
Stink
Is so some bajans think

After so many years of NIFCA
Dem still searching for Culture
And whenever dem want to present Award
Dem tell you fa come to Combermere yard
Let dem offer you two rock-cake
And a warm soft drink
Cause is so some bajans think
True thing that
Is so how dem think
Stink
Is so how some bajans think

Look how Ronald Biggs
Can come and ask for justice here
While A-one can lick-up we own Pele

An' do so and (just) trod 'way
Now since Pele killing a murder
How come they can't get de woman
To Answer?
But is so some bajans think
True thing that
Is so how dem think
Stink
Is so some bajans think

Dem go wait for El Verno del Congo
To dead-up and decay . . .
And dem go listen for applause in America or
Canada
Before they clap for Timmy Callender down here . . .
Dem go watch Bruce St. John
Go long
An' dem go let Elombe leff . . .
Dem going gaze
As 'Gold-Bead' do so an' gone
An' dem never
Going to honour
None o' these men 'bout here I say
Cause is so some bajans think
True thing that
Is so how dem think
Stink
Is so how some bajans think . . .

Man never sit down wid dem
An' dem and Man never reason
Long time man check dem Legislation
An' man steer
Clear
Of dem conviction . . .
Clear of de loop holes
In de Law
When dem push through
A bill in de Parliament
An' de teachers and civil servants
Dis-satisfied still
Yes is so some bajans think
True thing that
Is so how dem think
Stink
Is so some bajans think

Now you really see why things
Gotta change.
You gotta do-'way wid de dog
When you can't cure de 'mainge'
You gotta move to muster
A People's Militia
Cause who else going
Ease de Pressure?
And what is the use of saving de children
If you can't bequeath unto them a Nation?
Is so some bajans think
True thing that
Is so how dem think
Stink
Is so some bajans think

En Route To Killsome

COUNTRYMAN KARL BLACK by Neville Farkie

Published by Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications

Price: £2.95

Reviewed by Imruh Bakari Caesar

The novel, "Countryman Karl Black", is a story of a young man's journey from the country to the urban ghettos of Kingston, Jamaica. Karl Black lives in the village of Guys Hill. He has two brothers and two sisters, all younger than himself. His mother, Miss Birdie, is a higgler and his father, Kojo, is a peasant farmer.

Within the idyllic Jamaican countryside, Farkie paints a picture of frustration as Karl reflects upon his surroundings. He experiences his father fighting the rocky, hillside land which he owned. A piece of land cultivated with cutlass and hoe but yielding little. Facilities, there are none. The water pipe was applied for many years ago with no response from the authorities. The village school was overcrowded and noisy. Beside it stood the biggest church in the district, empty and quiet.

For four years Karl had worked as a carpenter for Maas Charlie, a man who monopolised whatever work was available in the village. Maas Charlie employed Karl and others to do the work for which he paid eight dollars a week. "What use eight dollars have to a working man these days?" Karl thought.

Karl wanted a house and a family of his own. He was not prepared to struggle with the land like his father was doing, and even if he did, there was no land anyway. He would not continue to be exploited by Maas Charlie, neither did he want to share the fate of the men who spent their lives in the rum bar. He must go to Kingston or the city of Killsome, as his friend Ras Bongo called it.

The story then becomes a journey into consciousness through Karl's experience and encounters with the Jamaican politi-

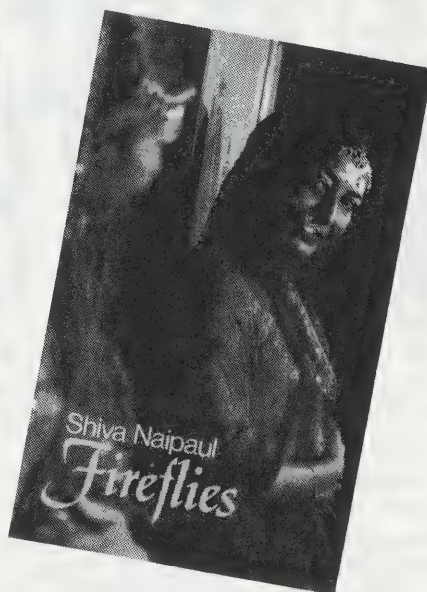
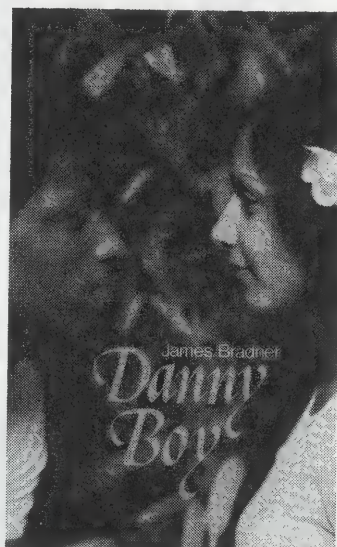
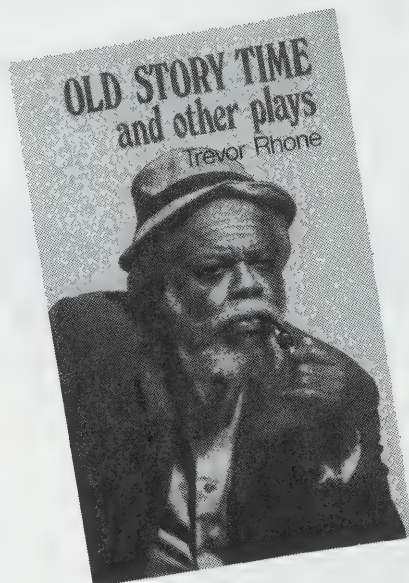
cal, social and economic reality. The journey from Guys Hill to Kingston is a tale of irony and contrast. On the bus with the market women, his awareness of their role and the value of the produce that they bring to town in return for a meagre existence is sharpened. There are also the low income houses costing ten thousand dollars and built on good farming land, in contrast to the homes built with pieces of board and zinc nailed together.

On arrival in Killsome, Karl heads for his Aunt Hilda, a woman with whom he had spent a part of his earlier years and had come to think of as his mother. As he makes his way to her home it is brought to him that he might have left a heaven not worth living in for a hell of crabs in a barrel.

Farkie's main concern is always with Karl's thoughts, and the way in which he interprets his experiences based on a simple desire to "make myself a better man". His perceptions are invariably humourously expressed. It is a humour born out of an undulled sensitivity and optimism, and a spontaneous response to the reality around him.

One of the story's most vivid moments

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occurs when Karl and his childhood friend John (now known as Kwame) have their first meeting since his arrival in town. They decide to go to Hope Gardens to "talk 'bout life". The symbols and images of the gardens are inescapable:

"They crossed the street and walked towards the two large grey concrete pillars each bearing part of the name 'Hope Gardens'. An arch, made of half-inch steel, linked the two pillars. Lodged somewhere near the middle of this arch, was a well designed crown, sitting atop the initials ER. The symbols seemed to remind everyone passing below, they were entering the most beautiful garden in an independent country, with the queen that had donated its independence, still head of the state. Such a fine, fairy godmother greeted her children as they came."

Farki leaves no doubt that he is speaking about contemporary Jamaica. It is here, in the midst of this beauty, that the most absurd human activity takes place. It is here that Kwame tells Karl of his family experience and his trade union work for which he had been branded a 'Black Power Communist'. It is here, some time later, that Karl met a shy and distrustful young woman with a child, who were to become his 'family'.

Karl had come to know the frustrations of looking for a job. Aunt Hilda had been a victim of a pickpocket gang. The casual work he got, through Miss Rachael, Kwame's mother, took him to the affluent Beverley Hills, home of a mulatto manager and his American wife. Karl, in the course of earning a small but crucial pittance, was able to discover the hypocrisy and debauchery concealed behind a facade of pompous living.

The managers wife not only seduces Karl, but offers him money in return for information that would subvert Kwame's union. He refused and an enraged white, American woman slaps him. Karl retaliates with his fist and leaves in fear of the consequences.

Karl returns to Guy's Hill for a visit, taking with him, for the first time, his now pregnant 'young lady' Doreen, her son Huey who now calls him pa, and Kwame. It is almost a year since he left the village. They arrive in Guys Hill and Karl introduces his friends to his family and others in the village. The real reunion, however, takes place on the river bank with Ras Bongo. As Bongo makes his poetic, rastafarian pronouncements, Kwame outlines his plans for a better country.

Here the novel becomes overtly didactic and Farki runs the risk of being repetitive. The development of the re-

lationship between Doreen and Karl is also dealt with in a similar manner. While understanding the urgency of Farki's concern, these crucial episodes turn out to be the weak links in the story.

Farki's writing comes out of a period of Jamaican history when, after nearly a decade, what was said to be socialism turned out to be 'sosoism'. It was an experience of high expectation followed

by disappointment and despair. Farki is concerned with the way in which the governing institutions of the colony or neo-colony disposes the workers and peasants. His novel deals with the tyranny that assaults the lives of Jamaican Africans, a situation not unlike much of the Caribbean. Within the rhetoric of his characters, as they discuss solutions, is the assurance of continued struggle and self-awareness.

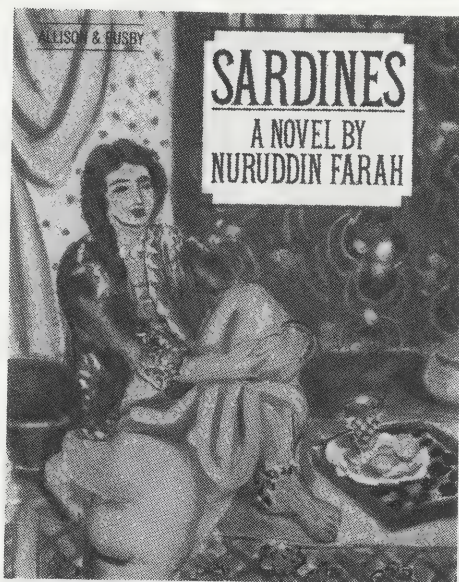
Countryman **KARL BLACK**

Neville Farki



Estranged And Alone

SARDINES by Nuruddin Farah
Published by Allison and Busby
Price: £7.95



She was young and beautiful. By the standards of anyone anywhere in the world she was well-read, one could even say she was very learned. Professionally she was a journalist. She had taken a degree in literature, then applied her talent to writing for the press; she freelanced while still a student in Italy and when she returned to Somalia got a newspaper job. Two and a half years later she was appointed acting editor of the only daily in the country. She came into head-on confrontation with the authorities over the paper's editorial policy. She was sacked. A presidential decree forbade her to publish her writings inside the Somali Democratic Republic. So she directed her talent elsewhere. . .

Medina, whose cosmopolitan education has freed her from the strict traditions of Islam but made her an outsider in her own country, is at the centre of this story of power struggles where, according to

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The Caribbean Jigsaw: A Portuguese View

PITCH LAKE by Alfred Mendes

Published by New Beacon Books

Price £4.50

Reviewed by Leslee Wills and Claire Holder

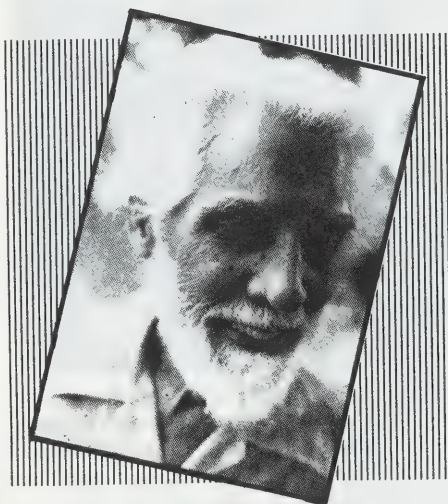
Joe is son and heir to a Portuguese, rum-shop proprietor in the small town of San Fernando in Trinidad. He renounces the dingy and debilitating rum-shop syndrome and moves to the capital city, Port of Spain. In this new world, he is desperate to repudiate those former associations and habits that would hinder his full acceptance into the ranks of the white skinned, Portuguese, commercial class. It is difficult, for he is insecure and ill-at-ease amongst them.

Through his brother, Henry, and his sister-in-law, Myra, Joe's social ambitions come nearer to being realised. Myra arranges a 'good' match with the rich, high-society Cora, and Henry secures him a good job. Yet, Joe gets involved in an affair with the attractive maid in the new household. It is a repetition of a previous affair, in which he got himself hopelessly entangled with a 'coloured' (of mixed ancestry) girl in San Fernando. He is unable to resist the lure of the lower class women-folk.

Joe feels he must (and he does in the end) fight his inclinations. The novel becomes an exploration of his torn feelings. He is torn between his affection for the maid on the one hand, and the values he must, of necessity, adopt on the other. He chooses the well-off, Portuguese Cora instead of the pregnant maid, Stella. The climax is disturbing and tragic, especially since his is not a clear-cut choice. It is a rather messy tug-of-war of conscience. However, Joe's denial of his innermost feelings is the greater tragedy.

Through Joe, the author Mendes, indicts the value system of his Portuguese peer group; he exposes their insecurities, prejudices and, above all, their limitations.

'Pitch Lake's main strength is Mendes's careful and rounded treatment of his characters. Take Henry Da Costa, Joe's brother. He represents success. In Port of Spain, he is respected and influential. We learn that his greatest pleasure and spare time activity is his stamp collection. Yet, we know, too, that he is bitter and cynical at home. He displays a shrewd sense in recognising that by merely



tolerating his wife, Myra, he is paying the price for his own social aspirations. He allows his brother to consider the same path, thereby espousing the self same perverse value system that entraps him. That Henry is presented as the shining example outside his household, yet remains sullen and sarcastic within, is Mendes' way of exposing the irony of Henry's success. That Henry is also fully conscious of these ironies shows the extent to which he is hopelessly enmeshed.

Of the woman, Stella, the maid, is the one presented as nearest an ideal. Her purity is sometimes movingly evoked. She is vulnerable and, without doubt a victim of her circumstances. The author suggests some manipulative instincts and cunning on her part, but only just.

Myra, Joe's sister-in-law and mentor, is both maudlin and meddling. Like Joe she is weak, she is also neurotic, but, ultimately, we must acknowledge her strength of purpose. The author uses Myra, more than any other character, to project the shallowness, the racialism and snobbery which exist in their section of Trinidad society.

Perhaps, the most surprising insight into the women portrayed is the development of the black, Barbadian cook. She is introduced as a hideous ogre and becomes, as the plot unfolds, a sensitive human. She represents all that Joe fears will envelop him, and, consequently, triggers his cruel, irrational feelings of superiority. Yet, when Miss

Martha and her daughter, Maria, his girlfriend from San Fernando days, turn up in Port of Spain for a confrontation, it is the cook who successfully intervenes. It is Rebecca, the cook, once more, who rescues Stella from homelessness when it is discovered that she is pregnant by Joe. Joe's and Myra's lack of humanity and ineffectuality are contrasted to the disciplined generosity of Rebecca, the level-headed cook. Thus, Mendes balances their pathological repugnance to her.

The liberated, independent Cora is the mouthpiece, for the author's recognition of the plight of women in colonial Trinidad. She is overbearing and patronising in her attitude to Joe. We are made aware of her intention to mother and oppress him. Yet, her views on the constricting nature of a woman's role in marriage are advanced ones. She states: "I want to be just as free after marriage as before." Hers is such a valid perspective, that we must review the image that Mendes projects. Cora plans to take on a maternalistic role, but she also provides financial security and therefore social stability. Joe, likewise, was paternalistic towards Stella; he too would have provided security and stability through marriage. Joe chose Cora, the source of strength and stability within the commercial middle classes, and would need to be mothered by her in that social milieu where he was a veritable stranger.

The author's intimate knowledge of the feelings of the women, his insights into their strategies, suggest that he might have been a ladies' man in his day. Yet, he unwittingly participates in perpetuating the domination of the fair, white woman over the mass of black women. Joe condemns Maria, the 'coloured' girl from his past, for not being a virgin. It is strongly implied that Stella, the servant, was one before Joe seduced her. Yet Cora is protected. Scarcely any reference is made to her intimate relations with Joe. It is not that it is important, for we suspect that she is not. Even so, she escapes Mendes' tendency to thoroughly unclothe and lay bare his characters. Joe suddenly sees Cora after his infidelity with Stella in the following light. "Poor little Cora, poor innocent Cora". We can measure the extent to which he equates purity with whiteness. He confuses his betrayal of his resolve to resist Stella with his betrayal of Cora. In this exaltation of Cora, Mendes himself becomes blinded, for nowhere does he point out its incongruity.

And the vulgar brutality of the racism practised by these Portuguese ex-indentured is one of the twin themes of the novel. The pitch lake of the title would refer, in geographical terms, to the

then growing oilfield and static sugar plantation dependent worker community from which Joe sought to escape. The pitch lake extends beyond this to symbolize the negative state of Joe's mind. It becomes the ever threatening, all consuming blackness that he fears will engulf him.

The author, sharp in tone, conveys this deeply rooted repugnance for other groups, especially blacks. Ivan Van Sertima, in his assessment of Edgar Mittelholzer's early works, isolates this main obsession of early migrant families to "maintain social purity and family identity against inroads of black slave blood".

Important, as well, to these Europeans descended migrants, in cosmopolitan societies such as Trinidad's, were the varying, often nebulous, shades of distinction amongst themselves. There was the old order, Catholic mistrust of Presbyterians; The Madieria-born snobbery towards creole-born (born in the colonies); and finally, the contempt of the new and rising commercial classes for the rum-shop owning group.

The tensions of the story are internal. There is no real melodrama except when Miss Martha and her daughter visit. And this is contained. The violence is of a psychological kind. The story is confined to Joe's restricted world.

The author does not make much use of the wider, tropical setting as such. He only just sets the political climate (It is the time of the labour leader Cipriani, a creole member of the Legislative Council in Trinidad).

The language and narrating technique, employed in this novel, reinforces the author's command of character and plot. He shifts with ease to the different forms of the creole vernacular, always providing, at the same time, a highly articulate over-view. For at a time when the 'creolese' dialect, or distinctions within, were not accepted or even documented, Mendes allows us to understand every nuance of his characters by his fluent control of dialect.

The novel is very much a tragedy of 'manners' in a world preoccupied with 'seems'. A drawing room drama in the mould of Jane Austen's 'Pride and Prejudice'.

It is a fascinating story, and more so because it parodies the instinct for self-preservation of many ethnic groupings in a plural setting. It is a most accurate, in depth portrayal of the Portuguese community in the Caribbean. In the end, the success or failure of Joe's strivings for upward mobility must be seen in the context of that group's immense need to consolidate its class position during that period of the country's history.

For R And R In The Rain

Knock, knock. . . who's there?
R & R in the rain (add failed)
But that would be jumping the gun..
But then I never saw the gun
till he clicked it.
I never felt the gun till
my temples were nearly overturned
by this money snatcher.
All week the house hugged me
The walls stood straight duty
for me
The windows grateful for my openness.
All week just me and the cow lowing
and the tyger striped anteater
and the solitaire.
Just me and my bush family.
The rain mixed your knock
with equal parts credibility
and damp obscurity.

The knock knock joke was on me
I opened to your face set
in brute calm
"Ah cum fi yu and the munny".

I fought you.

For breaking the friendship with the house and me.
For what might have been the painless delivery
of a poem.
For the week's harassment from the mad rass woman
For the dishonest men who ripped me off in loudness
name
For victimization and unprincipled dealings.
For the system that breeds lost lumpen men like you.
For my mother who work all her life to rest,
and can't rest yet.
For my brother who fought a war for strangers and
lost
For all the times I smiled when I should have spat!

I BEAT YOU!

C. Lorna Goodison

Blue wide pants the colour of China skies along
the river Hudson. Hail—the other shore.
Sunday O Sunday
silent day under the viaduct
with one bottle of vermouth
a pint to lips wet
and glistening
he talks to himself
London tweed—with the innovative vents
in the armpits, denim jacket-vest and red bandana

*Ho the train
the river train
the western train
lonely train
O Sunday Sunday
river day
river train
O Sunday*

He smiles at his song
Longshoreman hat
Face in the water
Black face.

Slow walk saunter walk
One bottle of wine
No one to call mine
"Hey boy—hold it!"

The police train on Sunday

Blinking red light no use to fight. He drains the bottle as the
cops open wide both doors of the squad car and leave them
open as they saunter, like he, to the showdown. "Whatcha
doin' boy? Drinkin' wine? Its Sunday. Why ain't you in
church?" They talk one sentence at a time, taking turns as if
they were actually one.

He chortles, raises hands high and rests them on the hood.
Spreads his legs apart.

They pat him down. "Where you live? Got an address?
Got any money? Where you work?"

He sings: "I ain't got no money— and I ain't got no job—
I ain't got a home— and I ain't got no one to call my own."

Long pauses—"Well, shall we take him in?— "Aw!" They
pat him with their clubs on arm on legs. Not hard. Just enough
to make him feel it.

He thinks again and again, ain't no big thang—take me in
or turn me loose.

He walks eastward thru the Village, the sun going down
streaking pinks and blues in his path. He walks down West 10th
Street to 8th Street to St. Marks Place to the end, the park.
Through the park to the end. Down 8th Street to the end.
Darkness. He climbs the tenement stairs one by one.

Alone in his room it is dark. He does not turn on the lights.
He sits on the couch.

Dawn light comes through the windows. He is reeled over
on the couch having fallen asleep. He washes his face in the
kitchen sink and then is gone again.

He saunters to Avenue "C" where the street merchants are
setting up shop. Wood fires burn warming the hands of the
vendors. He buys an onion roll and a pint of orange juice.
Standing on the corner he hums, putting his feet in time to
both the street melody and the workings of his jaws. The sun
comes up over the housing project on Avenue "D". An orange
blob.

He smiles the first smile of the day.

The Kid

C. David Henderson

Love's Hidden Secrets

RUBY by Rosa Guy
Published by Victor Gollancz
Price £5.50
Reviewed by Angela Watson

Few books, in my experience, are able to make a significant impression on school-children. 'The Friends', by Rosa Guy, managed to achieve this with its powerful portrayal of experiences in black American youth. 'Ruby', by the same author, should stimulate a similar interest.

'Ruby' continues where 'The Friends' left off. Their mother dead, Ruby and her sister, Phyllisia, the principal character in 'The Friends', are left in the care of their tyrannical West Indian father, Calvin Cathy. He is an immigrant to New York and is preoccupied with keeping his restaurant in business. He refuses to give his daughters any freedom and forbids them associating with young men. Ruby, who has an obsessive need for affection, becomes involved in a lesbian relationship with a fellow student. The secrecy of their friendship is overshadowed by Ruby's constant fear that Calvin finds out. This provides for the most intriguing events in the novel. Rosa Guy effectively coincides the drama/suspense with the development of her characters.

Ironically, 'Ruby' ends in a similar way to 'The Friends'; Calvin breaks down emotionally and weeps when he virtually loses his daughter Ruby.

Ruby is an attractive, endearing but lonely eighteen year old at school in Harlem. Even when she has experienced the most intellectually stimulating and intensively intimate relationship that any teenager could adequately cope with, she suffers a gnawing emptiness. Daphne Duprey, her idol, lover and classmate is sophisticated, self-educated and ambitious. She possesses all the assertive qualities that Ruby lacks. Ruby's loneliness becomes the most penetrating feeling in Rosa Guy's sensitive description of their relationship.

Education is another aspect of the novel, with varied implications for different characters. Calvin is firmly in the West Indian tradition when he believes that his daughters will succeed if they are educated. Ruby and Phyllisia, who have the experience of being educated in Harlem by teachers who despite the black students they teach, have cultivated values and opinions different from those of their father. In Ruby's pressured confrontation with Miss Gottlieb, a crippled teacher,



we experience how these values and opinions are formed. Miss Gottlieb's intense prejudice makes Ruby recoil in a life and death situation where she is forced to accept Ruby's assistance.

'Miss Gottlieb looked at her angrily. . How dare you pray for me? She would not beg. . she expected nothing from the smelly eyetalians, the sweaty niggers.'

Rosa Guy's command of language can be

poetically rich and descriptive as well as realistic and direct.

'Love was green. Dark green, light—the new light green of a world bursting with life. Love was blue. A pinkish blue, light blue, bright blue — mid-night blue pinpointed by a shimmering sliver needles of light piercing the heart. Love was orange. A blinding orange pulling the world out of darkness. . .'

Nursery Rhyme Lament

first time
jack & jill
used to run up de hill everyday
now dem get pipe. . . an
water rate increase

everyday dem woulda
reincarnate humpty dumpty
fe fall off de wall

little bwoy blue
who loved to blow im horn
to de sheep in de meadow: little bwoy blue
grow up now . . ' an
de sheep dem get curried
in a little cold suppa shop down de street

yu rememba when man was a ponder fe guh moon?
yet dem did 'ave de cat
fe play fiddle
so dat de cow coulda jump over it
every full moon . . . an
lite bill increase

den dere was
de ol' woman
who neva went to nuh fambly plannin clinic
she used to live someweh dung
back-o-wall inna one lef'-foot shoe
back-o-wall in fashion now . . . an
she move

jack sprat . . . ah, yes, jack sprat
who couldn't stand fat; im start eat it now. . . but
im son a vegetarian. . . 'cause
meat scarce

little bo-peep who lost 'ar sheep. . . went out
to look fe dem
an find instead a politician. . . an
is now livin in beverly hills

mary
(yu know 'ar. . . she had a white lamb)
well, she saw bo-peep
an decide she woulda give 'ar lamb
to cinderella godmother fe
change im colour to black
before midday. . . an
society grow

little jack
rememba im?
im use fe siddung a de corna
a king st. & barry st.
de adda day im put im thumb
inna im mout' . . . an
vomit. . . while
tom tom was stealin a woman wig
im fall inna jack vomit. . . an
bruk im friggin neck

tom tom fada, de pied piper
turn pro now . . . an
stop blow to rats
but realize seh
nu rat neva falla im dung de rivva. . . an
im dead 'cause de clock strike 1:30. . . an
tic toc tic

first time
man use fe love dem
but dis is not de time fe dem. . . cause
dem deh days done
... an wi write. . .

Reggae Sociology

JAH MUSIC: The evolution of the Popular Jamaican Song by Sebastian C Clarke.

Published by Heinemann Educational Books. Price £4.95.

Reviewed by Worrell Forbes



The most significant development in modern popular music, over the last decade, has been the gradual rise of reggae music — modern popular Jamaican music — to international status and recognition. This has generated an enormous amount of interest from music critics, journalists and sociologists and the like. A recent response is 'Jah Music: The evolution of the popular Jamaican song' by the Trinidadian poet and music critic, Sebastian Clarke.

The author informs us that in writing this book, he was motivated "by the social and political aspects of the music". His "hope" is to promote the "understanding of the historical origins of Jamaican music from which the present reggae evolved". He warns us not to expect a "comprehensive study of the music", and that the book has been written "solely through a particular perspective and orientation".

But even on a third reading 'Jah Music', Mr Clarke's "particular perspective" eludes the reader. And it is precisely because of the absence of any clear historical perspective on the nature of the relationship between art and society, that the author has not entirely succeeded in the task he set himself. We read from chapter to chapter without finding any real insights into the dynamics of the music's evolution. So what exactly has Sebastian Clarke done in this book?

The author attempts to give us an outline of the history of colonial conquest, an outline of the significant slave rebellions, a history of the Christian religion in Jamaica and its impact on the slaves, the folk culture of the slaves, the development of politics and society in

Jamaica up to independence — and all this in 21 pages. We are not shown how this historical experience is reflected in the music.

He focuses on the Rastafarian movement which is traced back to the "Ethiopianism" of the early black churches. This is followed by a somewhat irrelevant digression into Egyptology and the origins of the Jewish race. There follows a superficial discussion of rasta music, its origins and rasta lyricism. We are not shown how rastafarianism as a world-view is reflected in lyricism of the music. Nor is the contribution of reggae to the popularisation and rise of the rastafarian movement addressed.

He also deals with the development of reggae music from the 1950s up to the early seventies. The influence of black American music, the role of the sound systems, dance halls, the birth of 'ska' and its evolution to 'rock steady' and then to reggae, guns, ganga, youth rebellion, political violence, crime, the pioneers of the Jamaican recording industry are all mentioned. But we are told nothing about how changes in the music related to changes in the society at different stages during the music's evolution.

Then we are offered a history of the Wailers and the group's original leaders, Bob Marley, Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer. It provides little more than biographical details and a personal assessment of each. This is followed by a discussion on the "phenomenon of the toaster or DJ in Reggae music... as a new form of music" and the role of

the sound system, the early DJs and those that made an impact as recording artists, as well as the role of 'dub' music as a vehicle for the DJ, the development of the form, and the relationship between the DJ and the audience. There is no mention of the rootedness of the DJ form in the wider oral culture of rhymes, old time sayings, ring songs etc; the influence of the early talking tunes of people like Prince Buster, and the influence of the Black American 'toasts' and the jive-talk of people like King Pleasure and Louis Jordan. Clarke devotes a chapter to 'dub' a particular style of reggae where the music is stripped to its basic essentials, beat and rhythm, combined with electronic gadgetry to produce illusory effects. The social significance of the emergence of this style of reggae is ignored.

Chapter seven concentrates on the British scene and provides useful documentation on the history of reggae music in Britain. He says nothing about the black experience in Britain and its implications for the progress of the music. The final chapter is an appraisal of the progress of the music, the status of the artists, its impact internationally and the way in which large, white record companies deal with the exploitation of the music.

The author's sweep is quite wide. Unfortunately, it is not matched by any depth. In spite of its obvious inadequacies, 'Jah Music' is valuable. It contains a good deal of useful information.

Four Films With Blacks As Subjects

GROVE MUSIC and GROVE CARNIVAL films by Henry Martin and Steve Shaw. An Arts Council Film.

RIOTS AND RUMOURS OF RIOTS by Imruh Bakari Caesar. A National Film School Film.

BURNING AN ILLUSION by Menelik Shabazz. A National Film School Film.

Reviewed by Akua Rugg

Films about blacks have tended to fall into two categories: worthless but amusing, high-minded and a bit boring. Now, however, there exists a group of young black directors making films that are as entertaining as they are instructive.

Four of these films, 'Burning an Illusion', 'Grove Music', 'Grove Carnival' and 'Riots and Rumours of Riots', recently had premieres at the annual London Film Festival.

BURNING AN ILLUSION

'Burning an Illusion' is a full length feature film, in colour, directed by young Barbadian born, Menelik Shabazz. He has concocted a molotov cocktail of a movie, using the most common-place of plots — boy meets girl — to explode a number of

ideas on race, sex and class struggle. The film demonstrates the director's powerful grasp of the art of film making. It is glamorous to look at and stimulates the imagination by its inventive development of the banal plot. His choice of a young black woman as principal character is highly original. She embarks on an odyssey, physically and mentally, which allows the director to describe the manners, customs and preoccupations of young working class blacks. The meticulous attention paid to details of dialogue, dress and decor, the exquisite matching of actor to character so that not only the 'stars', but the entire superb supporting cast turn in faultless performances, lends the film an authenticity

that makes it riveting to watch. Underneath the lush, surface bloom of the film, imparted to it by excellent photography, is a revealing account of the refusal of young blacks to be treated as victims in this society.

REGGAE AND CARNIVAL

'Grove Music' is a documentary film, in colour, by Trinidadian, Henry Martin. It takes a look at musicians living in The Grove, an area in London's Notting Hill where, during the race riots of the 50s, blacks had to fight for their lives. Various musicians are shown in performance: Black Harmony, Inity Rhythm, Aswad, Sons of Jah, Brimstone and Junior Brown. Also included are interviews with musicians. The musicians state their philosophy — that of Rastafarianism — with its rejection of the mores of European civilisation. The film is a cogent and coherent statement in



favour of this section of the black community. Martin makes intelligent and imaginative use of archive material — mostly newsreels — to show what the Rastas are for, and what they have broken from. In one instance, we see a black serviceman from the 40s flanked by white colleagues pledging "social integration" and "cooperation" on the part of West Indian immigrants. We then hear members of the following generation — in this case youths from the group Aswad — describing the music they play as music for rebels. Visually, the film is excellent, image is matched to idea vividly and precisely. In a telling sequence, he expresses the Rastas' belief that they are a nation within a nation. A group of young blacks appear on screen engaged in the typically English occupation of playing football, dressed in kit which flaunts the red, green and gold colours of the sect.

'Grove Carnival', another documentary in colour by the same director, demonstrates the power of film to distort as well as record reality. Martin films the Grove musicians so that they appear to be a force for the political and cultural liberation of blacks. This is achieved by the juxtaposition in the film of the musicians to soldiers fighting in Africa and also leaders of revolutionary movements in the Third World like Castro, Nyerere and Grenada's Maurice Bishop. The Carnival film, on the other hand, resembles nothing so much as a giant moving picture postcard in glorious colour.

Like most postcards, it says little about one of the most attended, cultural events of the country's cultural calendar. An event, moreover, which is the major focus for blacks, in this country, struggling to establish and develop their unique, cultural and social formations against great odds. The film contains spectacular views of the marvellous costumes of the bands and revelry, and makes you wish you were there all over again.

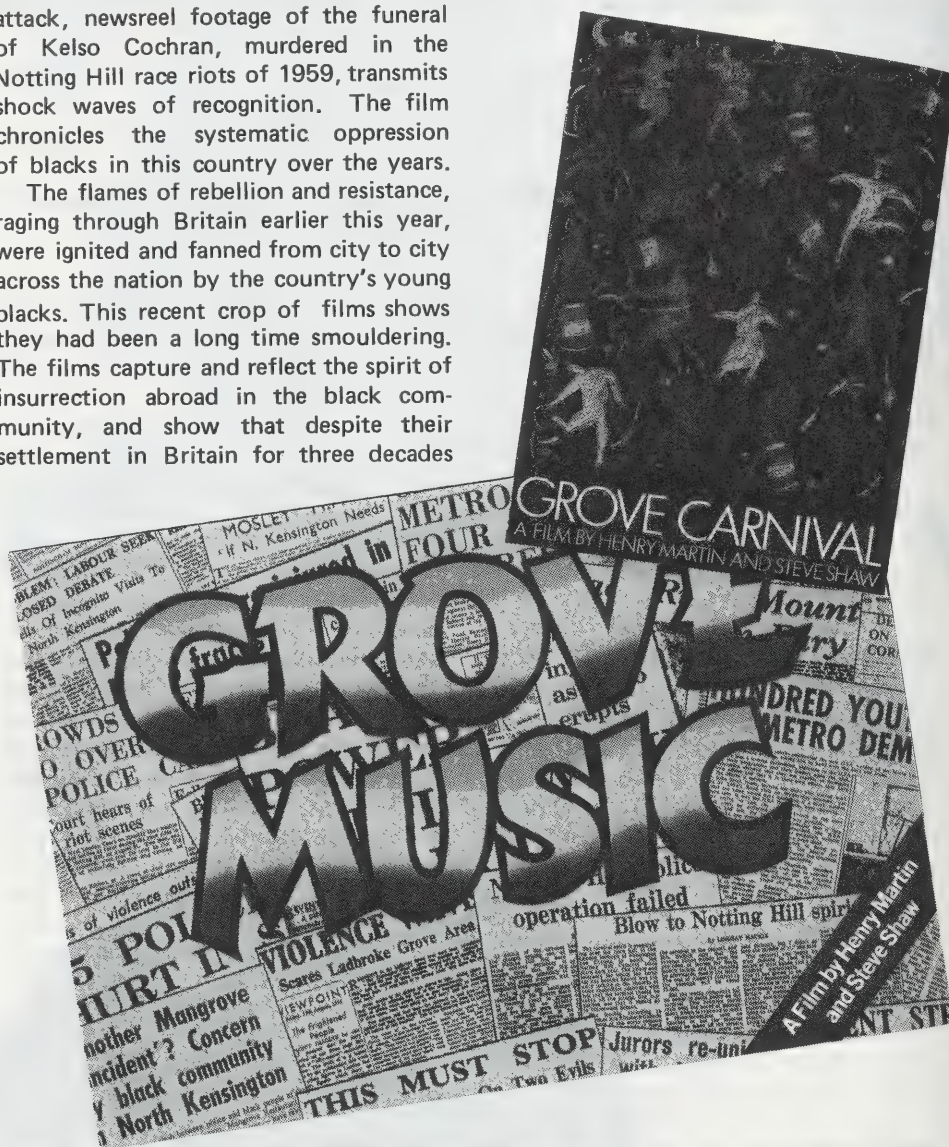
RIOTS AND RUMOURS OF RIOTS

'Riots and Rumours of Riots' is a colour documentary by Imruh Caesar. In it he alternates lengthy interviews of middle-aged blacks, talking about their experiences in the 40s and 50s, with sequences describing the lives of young blacks in contemporary Britain. The film is remarkable for the prodigious amount of information it disseminates. Caesar brings to light a wealth of material — still photographs, posters, handbills, newspaper clippings and newsreel footage. These are used to enhance the observations made by the pioneers of West Indian immigration to Britain, and are fascinating in their variety and scope. A recruiting poster shows the patriotic

fervour of a previous generation of West Indians for the mother country during the World War II. An advertisement shows how the same people were denied the basics of life — a place to live — by the host community. The film is more than an academic exercise in black history. This year when 13 West Indian children were massacred in a racist arson attack, newsreel footage of the funeral of Kelso Cochran, murdered in the Notting Hill race riots of 1959, transmits shock waves of recognition. The film chronicles the systematic oppression of blacks in this country over the years.

The flames of rebellion and resistance, raging through Britain earlier this year, were ignited and fanned from city to city across the nation by the country's young blacks. This recent crop of films shows they had been a long time smouldering. The films capture and reflect the spirit of insurrection abroad in the black community, and show that despite their settlement in Britain for three decades

and more, blacks cannot be regarded as mere coloured versions of the whites they live alongside. Absent from these films are themes which divert from rather than focus on the issues at stake in the black community. Gone too are protagonists who are a-credit-to-the-race because they display a passive stoicism in the face of adversity rather than a menacing militancy.



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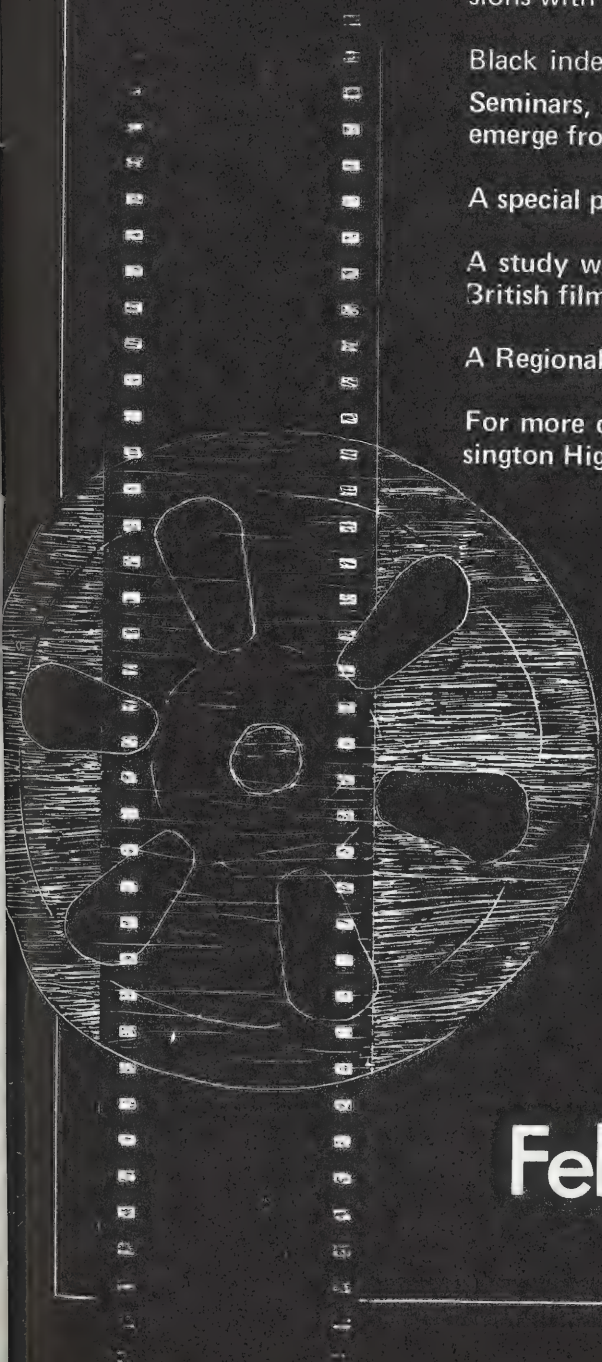
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February 1st - 13th 1982

Support Black Londoners Radio Programme

Alex Pascall has been presenting the BBC Radio London's 'Black Londoners' programme for 7 years.

He has managed to put out the programme on a 'shoestring' budget of £40 per week but despite the lack of resources, the team have managed to put out the programme 5 days a week from 7pm to 8pm.

The Black Londoners programme highlights issues affecting black people throughout the world, from the Dutch, French and English speaking West Indies, to the continents of America, Africa and Europe.

The programme deals with cultural, political and educational matters and

also finds time to raise personal matters affecting black people. The BBC's lack of funding means that the small staff have to spend valuable time in seeking funds from sympathetic sponsors.

The programme is greatly appreciated by blacks and has a wide audience as BBC statistics prove. The programme has also won awards.

The BBC are now proposing to cut the meagre resources allocated to the programme by refusing to employ permanent full time staff and this will put the programme's future in doubt.

Secret BBC documents reveal that the programme may be stopped. We believe that the BBC should be provid-

ing more resources to the programme in this period of tempestuous race relations and view their actions as racist.

We demand that:—

- * A full time permanent secretary be appointed to the programme.
- * A full time researcher be appointed to the programme.
- * The BBC recognises the programme within the permanent structure and format of BBC Radio London.
- * A budget be allocated which will enable the presenters to make programmes which will meet the needs of the black community.

Black Londoners Action Committee
c/o 9 Brank Sea Street,
Fulham, London SW6.

PROTEST

Tamasha In The Lok Sabha

Police atrocity, as the readers of 'Race Today' well know, is not an uncommon phenomenon in our times. The Indian police, in the regime of Indira Gandhi, have distinguished themselves by their internationally publicised blinding of suspects in Bihar, and by their earlier assault with batons on a demonstration of blind people which sought to hand in a petition to the Prime Minister. A rule of political life, under the same regime which often goes unmentioned in the international press is the sanction afforded by the ruling party to its activists to take direct illegal action against all those who oppose the party and the regime in India we call it political 'goondaism', the organised terror tactics of the Congress youth wing against citizens who dare to criticise the government or the system that allows it to govern.

We wish to bring to the notice of your readers one such incident in Bombay: On September 26th this year a young playwright, Randhir Khare, had

his play 'Tamasha In the Lok Sabha' (Shennanigans in the House of Commons) performed by actors from a handicapped group in a competition run by the Indian Centre for Special Education. The play was a satire on the proceedings of the Indian government. It was acted by the disabled because Mr Khare believes in using drama and creative activity as a means of educating both the disabled and the public, and bringing the handicapped into the mainstream of Indian life and discourse.

His efforts were not appreciated. At least not by the Congress Party. A member of the audience accosted him after the performance and asked him to publicly apologise for writing this satire on the grounds that 'the crippled have no right to say this!'. This objection after the performance was followed by several threatening phone calls to Mr Khare's house, and two days later he and his wife were accosted by 'persons unknown' and Mr Khare was severely beaten. The

family had, at least temporarily, to move out of their house. The police in Bombay have refused to take any action.

If the Indian regime values its reputation as a government for protecting the freedom of the artist, and the right of the artist to socially share his or her creation, it should institute a serious investigation into the dirty tricks departments of the ruling party, publicly repudiate such thuggery, pay Mr Khare and his family compensation and demonstrate by public acts that the disabled in India have not only equal rights but positive programmes to support their lives in a modern civilisation.

Note: We shall send a copy of this letter when published to Prince Charles who has undertaken the patronage of the handicapped in the year of the disabled.

Yours against barbarism,
Farrukh Dhondy
H O Nazareth
C L R James
Horace Ove

CREDITS

Illustrations on pages 4 and 6, Eden Charles

Illustrations on page 5, Una Howe

Illustrations on pages 25, 27 and 28, Erroll Lloyd

Poetry:

'I am a Poet' by Ntozake Shange reprinted from 'Nappy Edges', published by Bantam Books, N.Y., 1979

'The Kid' by David Henderson reprinted from 'The Low East', published by North Atlantic Books, California, 1980

'Nursery Rhyme Lament' by Mutabaruka reprinted from 'The First Poems', published by Paul Issa Publications, Jamaica, 1980

'Disco Rapso Dancing Shoes' by Bro. Resistance, reprinted from 'Blockfire', Trinidad and Tobago, 1980

'For R and R in the Rain' by Lorna Goodison, reprinted from 'Jamaica Woman: An Anthology of poems edited by Pamela Mordecai and Mervyn Morris, published by Heinemann Educational Books (Caribbean) Ltd, 1980

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Race Today

VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN FEBRUARY/MARCH 1982

PRICE 70p

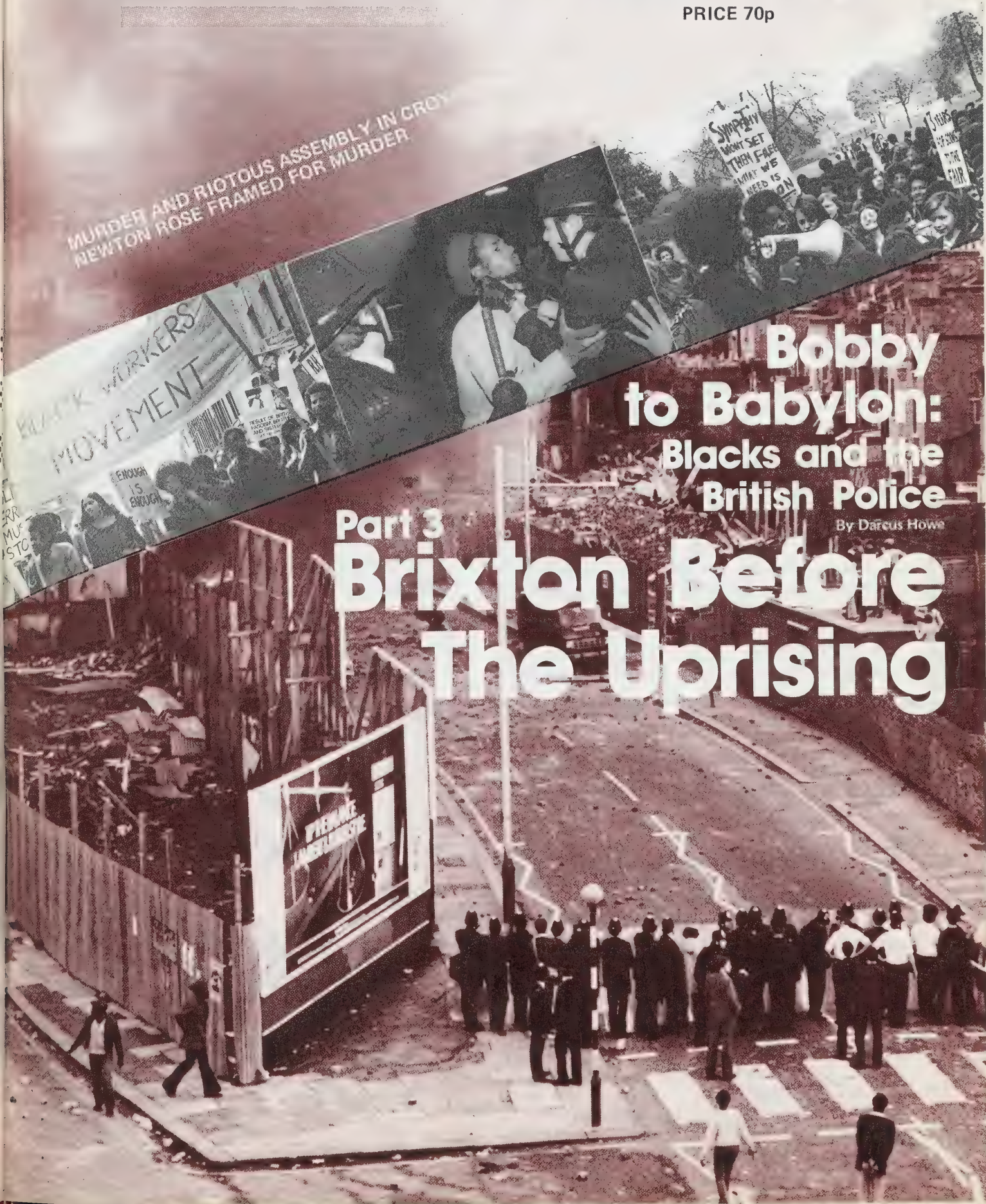
MURDER AND RIOTOUS ASSEMBLY IN CROY
NEWTON ROSE FRAMED FOR MURDER

**Bobby
to Babylon:
Blacks and the
British Police**

By Darcus Howe

Part 3

Brixton Before The Uprising



In this editorial we intend to take the gloves off and to speak plainly and directly. For eight months after the Brixton uprising this nation and its rulers have been wholly and solely taken up, on the question of policing, with what was going on in the Scarman inquiry. Young blacks were completely absent from this process. Following the summer uprisings, they altogether withdrew from the centre of the stage.

Since Scarman published his report, all focus moved to his recommendations. The debate and discussions have hinged around whether or not the government is prepared to implement this or that area of community policing; to what extent the police are prepared to accept an independent element in the complaints system; whether liaison committees ought to be statutory and so many other trivialities. It would appear that the public are being trained to take their eyes off the central protagonists, the black youth.

It is to them that we return in this editorial.

This government is playing with fire. It is either they are intent on deliberately provoking young blacks into violent extremities, in which case they hope for a crushing police victory, or they are blundering into what can only be described as a period of the bomb, the gun and serious internal disorder. Of these two evils we are hard put to choose the lesser.

Let us illustrate the point. Shortly after the summer, one of our members visited one of the northern cities seriously affected by the revolt. He came across a group of about one dozen young blacks at a youth club. They were discussing what they did, ought to have done

and did not do successfully during the riots. They analysed the police reaction in cold, matter of fact terms. Our colleague intervened, "where will this all end?" he asked. With an ease of expression, one of them replied, "We have to kill some of them". Our colleague was taken aback and needed a couple of seconds to adjust to this new reality. What moved him was the fact that none of the other young men appeared surprised at this remark. They did not bat an eyelid. It appeared, that in the course of their experiences, these young men had come to such a conclusion and that was that.

Recently in Bristol, close to 300 miles away, a West Indian parent echoed that view. "Someone is going to get killed," she said. This nation ought to know that West Indian parents are not given to alarmist statements. They tend to caution in the main. They have never spoken in this way. That parent, a woman, has come to that conclusion after a close and sensitive appreciation of the stage young blacks have reached.

The police ought to be aware of all this. If they are not, then they are not doing their jobs properly. If they are aware then the same goes, for they are deliberately withholding the information from the public. All Britain needs to know the extremes to which young blacks have been driven.

And Willie Whitelaw, like Nero before him, is fiddling while Rome burns.

What does the Home Secretary think he is doing, running around cobbling together these committees pompously described as police consultative committees? Take Brixton for in-

Designed by Eden Charles

Vol 14. No. 2

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HAS MOVED!**

OUR NEW
ADDRESS IS

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01-737 2268 SAME AS BEFORE

police and young blacks

stance: Does the Home Secretary really believe that a combination of Commander Fairbairn and his minions joined in committees with the like of George Greaves, Courtney Laws, Rene Webb, Ivan Madray et al would have an influence on blacks in Brixton? If he does then he is dreaming.

Let us state the case. On Friday April 10th 1980, during the preliminary skirmishes in the Brixton uprising, Webb, Laws, Madray, Greaves and Graham Kent, the Methodist Minister, went to Brixton police station. They spent eight hours there. At the end of the period, according to the police report, Webb, Kent and others promised that they would return to the black community to assure its members of the true facts of what happened early that evening. The delegation, said the police, were satisfied with the Commander's version of events. These men did return to the community. Race Today members saw them. But they dared not relay any such message. It is not that they play games with the police, it is not that they are spies for the black community, it is that they have not got the moral authority to influence blacks about anything. None of them dared relay what the police had told them.

On the evening of Monday 11th a public meeting was called at the Abeng Centre. The audience comprised mainly radicals of the left, black and white. Rene Webb took the platform. While he spoke, a posse of young blacks stormed in, snatched the microphone and proceeded to abuse him in the most humiliating way. Only modesty prevents us from repeating the abuse

verbatim. They knew him and hated his guts.

Only recently Ivan Madray was accused, in a leaflet, of collusion with the police. Senior police officers moved in, at once, to defend him.

Does Whitelaw really believe that a committee comprising these characters can deliver the black community? If he does he is seriously ill informed and living in cloud cuckoo land.

And Brixton is no exception. The same empty formula is being pursued throughout the country.

We detect a powerful police lobby behind the scenes. This lobby determines everything. They present a list of blacks with whom they have previously consorted and whom they think safe. Arm in arm, they deceive the nation that relations are fine and improving.

This lobby continues to manipulate the Home Office on the question of an independent element in the complaints structure. They give a little here and there but the general structures remain the same.

Unless and until a government, of whatever hue, is prepared to have done with them, we are headed for disaster. The Home Secretary must dramatically reduce police power now. Disband the lobby, dismantle those laws which give them the power to stop and search, dismantle the special squads within which all manner of brutalities and corruption are conceived. All that must be done now. The alternative is too dread to contemplate.

February 1982.

Letters

Dear Friends,

The United Nations have proclaimed 1982 International Year of Mobilisation for Sanctions against South Africa.

From March 11th to 13th the Anti-Apartheid Movement is organising a major conference entitled "Southern Africa: The Time to Choose", in London. The

conference is being co-sponsored by the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid and will be presided over by our President, Archbishop Trevor Huddleston.

Secondly, on the day following the conference, Sunday March 14th, the Anti-Apartheid Movement will be organising a national demonstration in London, on the themes "Forward to Freedom in Namibia and South Africa" and "Isolate Apartheid South Africa Now".

Yours sincerely,
Mike Terry
Anti-Apartheid Movement

Dear Race Today,
Congrats on the new Review. I particularly enjoyed the CLR presentation and the poet's "Profile on Black Beard." The journals' introduction was also thought provoking — I look forward to reading Race Today in 82 and to contribute to some of your collective events.

With best wishes.

T Sinclair
London

Dear Race Today,
Thank you very much for the copy of your magazine

containing the review of Burning An Illusion by Menelik Shabazz for our records.

I do however, wish to draw to your attention the fact that this film was funded entirely by money from the British Film Institute and is therefore a British Film Institute Production, not a National Film School film as stated in the review. We would be grateful if this could be amended accordingly.

Yours faithfully
Liz Reddish
Film Promotions Assistant

NEWS BACKGROUND

Newton Rose Framed For Murder

At 2.00am in the early morning of Friday 8th May 1981, Newton Rose left the birthday party of a friend in Leyton, London. At about the same time, three miles away in Glyn Road Hackney, Tony Donnelly, a white youth connected with the National Front Constitution Movement, was being stabbed to death.

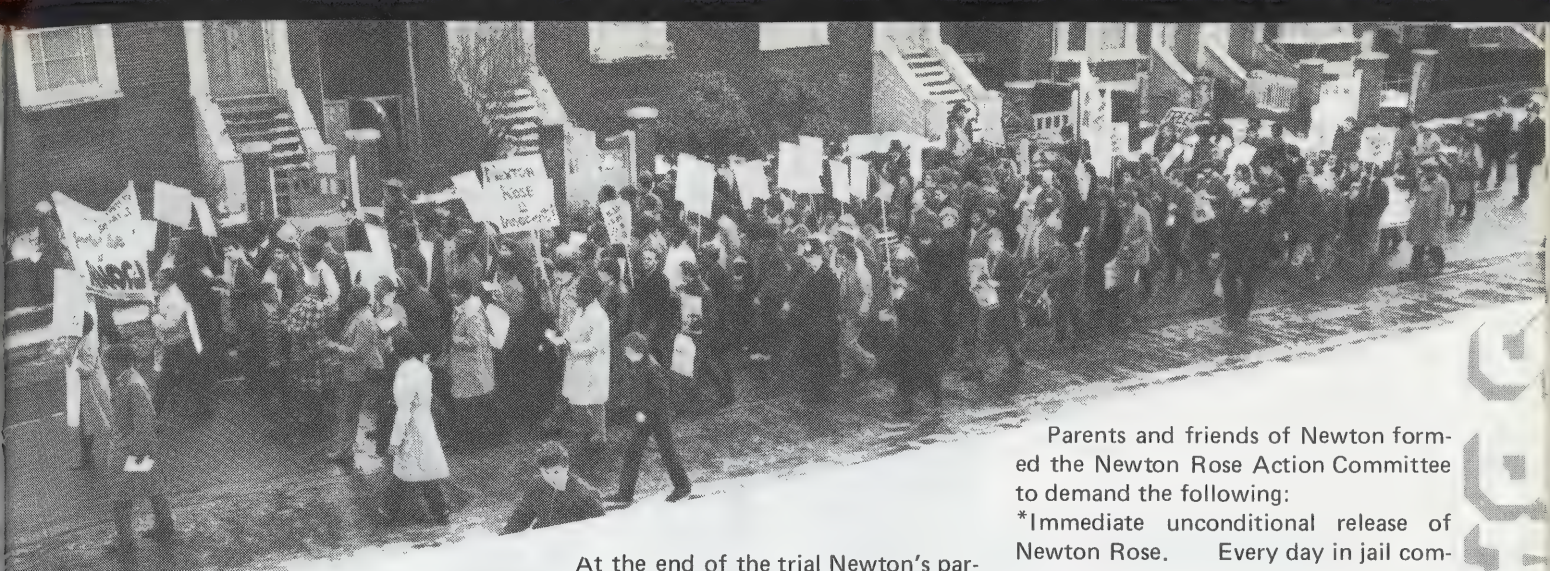
Newton Rose was tried and convicted at the Old Bailey on Friday 4th December 1981 of a murder that he did not commit and could not have committed after a trial lasting four weeks.

The police latched on to the idea that this was a crime of passion from the very day the murder was discovered. This was their line of investigation with Sandra Alexander, Newton's ex-girl friend. She had been to the Flamingo discotheque on the night of 7th/8th May with a party of friends. Donnelly was also there that night and was

acquainted with some of the friends in her party. She was in Donnelly's company, waiting for her brother to come home, shortly before Donnelly was killed. Because of his previous connection with Sandra, the police latched on to Newton Rose.

Newton Rose had been with friends— Ian Henry, Michael Clarke and Orville Johnson — that night at a birthday party and had never left it. They had taken a taxi home at about 2.00am and according to their driver had jumped out without paying in Lea Bridge Road near the roundabout at 2.15am. They were dissatisfied with the route the driver was taking. They then went to Clapton Pond to Jimac Car Services and took another taxi which dropped them home. The pol-





ice produced a driver from Jimac Car Services saying he had taken the boys home at 5.30am, but in court he admitted that this could have been another day.

On May 29th, Clarke and Henry were pulled in for a second time and threatened with being charged with murder themselves and denied bail if they refused to make statements implicating Newton Rose. They were also assaulted and threatened with further assault. Under heavy pressure they admitted to what the police wanted them to say.

A few days later Orville Johnson was put through the same procedure and finally made a statement in the presence of his solicitor's clerk implicating Newton in the murder of Donnelly. The main burden of their evidence under threat was that Newton had gone to Sandra's home to borrow money, even though he had been banned from going there for years, and had stabbed Donnelly whom he met there.

Once again the police got statements under threat to fit up the conviction of another black youth.

But Roxanne Walden saw what happened. She saw the actual attack on Tony Donnelly taking place by four white men, who had earlier come down the road in a car shouting 'Nigger lover'. Donnelly was to have been a scrutineer for the National Front at the GLC elections that night, May 7th. One of his best friends was a leading member of that fascist group. But Donnelly had gone to the Flamingo instead.

At the end of the trial Newton's parents received a handwritten letter bearing a swastika and signed WDF — the White Defence Force — "we are watching you".

The police investigation ignored Roxanne's eyewitness evidence and concentrated instead, as in the New Cross Massacre, on the frame-up they had concocted.

Newton Rose is appealing against conviction. On February 2nd, 1982 an application for bail for Newton Rose, Ian Henry, Michael Clarke and Orville Johnson was made.

Immediate bail was granted for Johnson, Henry and Clarke. Newton Rose was refused bail, but a date for his appeal was fixed - March 8th & 9th, 1982.

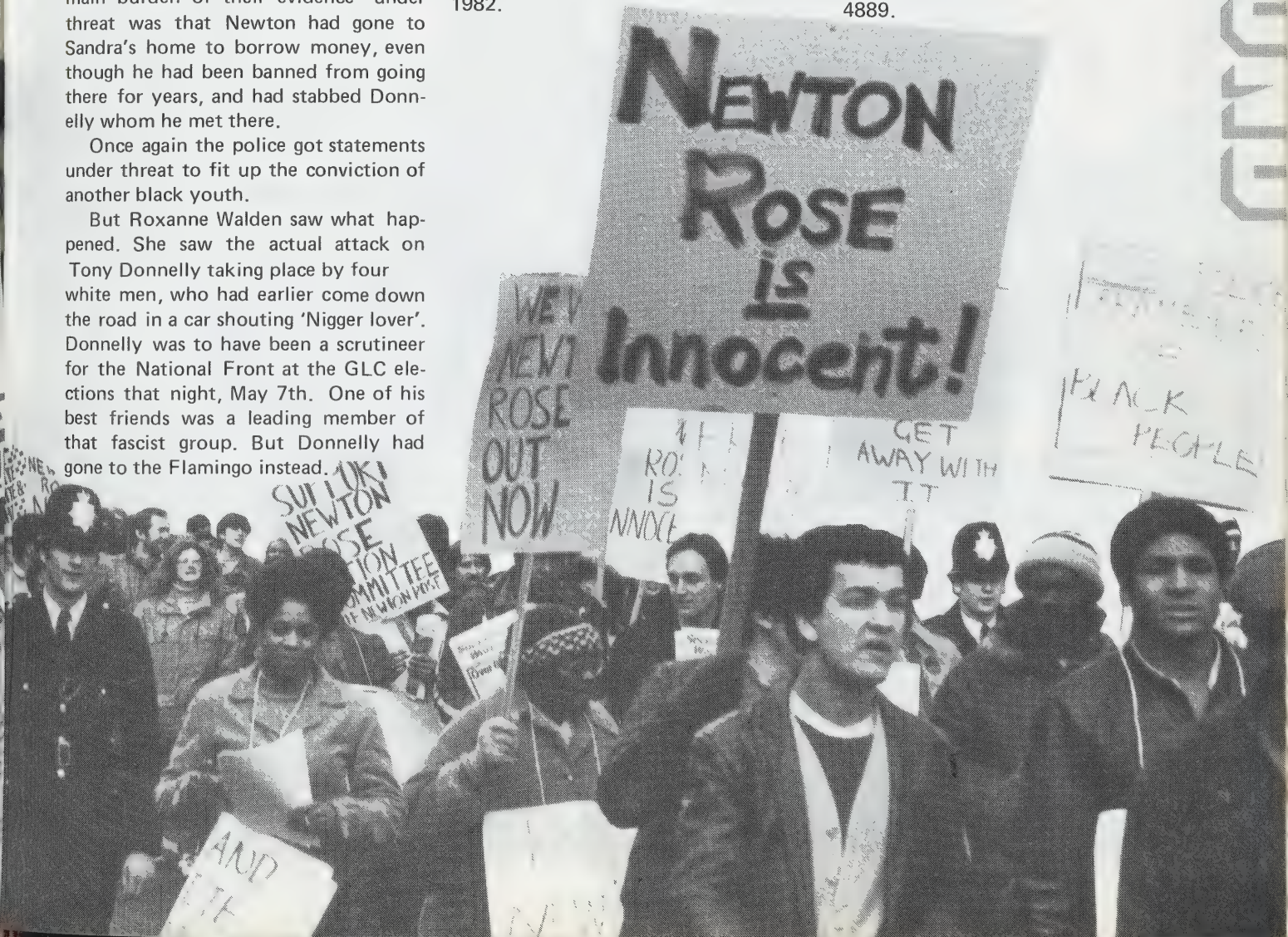
Parents and friends of Newton formed the Newton Rose Action Committee to demand the following:

*Immediate unconditional release of Newton Rose. Every day in jail compounds the frame up.

*Home Office, Registrar of Criminal Appeals, Director of Public Prosecutions must act now

*The police investigation of the case, carried out by Det. Inspector Goodall, Det. Sergeants Coomber and Deaney and Det. Constables Holloway and Miles must be reviewed and rejected.

A mass meeting, a public demonstration and a picket of Wormwood Scrubs prison have involved hundreds of local blacks in support of the campaign. A fund raising dance will be held at Albion Road Drill Hall, Albion Road, London N.16. Entrance fee £1.50. For further details contact the Newton Rose Action Committee at 76, Stroud Green Road, London N.4. Tel: 01-272 4889.



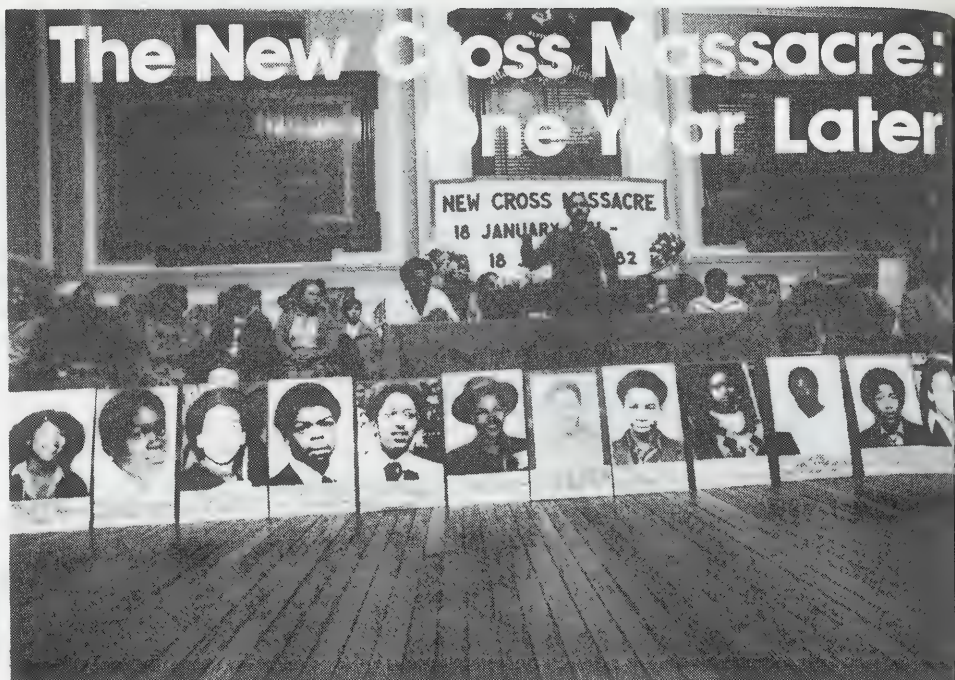
One year after the massacre of 13 young blacks at 439 New Cross Road, the British authorities have not yet resolved the major questions raised by the West Indian community and our allies in the country over this horrifying experience.

The coroner's inquest was a scandal, and the open verdict which resulted was unacceptable to all. The parents and relatives of the dead children applied to the Attorney General for his authority to have the inquest quashed at the Divisional Court. A new inquest was demanded. Seven months passed without any reply from the Attorney General's office.

Again, Commander Stockwell, who led the police enquiry, told the Coroner's court that his investigations were incomplete and he had 20 more witnesses to interview. The New Cross Massacre Action Committee are claiming that the investigations "are trapped in studied police inaction." This appears to be the case. Commander Stockwell has since been transferred to lead the Flying Squad and Chief Superintendent Bell is now in

charge of a small if not negligible team of officers. No one knows how much time, if any, is being spent on investigations. We think none at all.

The authorities were obviously hoping that the West Indian community, which developed mass radical action on this issue, would soon forget it. After all



we are a volatile people. They were wrong. Close to one thousand people attended Mrs Ruddock's memorial service for the 13 on Sunday 17th at the local church. The ceremony was marred by the hypocritical outpourings of Cannon Diamond who insisted on blessing the police officers who, for cynical reasons of state, put in an attendance. Also present were a gaggle of local political opportunists.

However, on the following evening, the New Cross Massacre Action Committee was able to retrieve the situation. The local Town Hall was packed to capacity as members of the Committee outlined developments over the past year. More than 400 blacks marched from the meeting past Deptford police station and on to 439 New Cross Road where they stood in silence for one minute. It was a commemorative occasion packed with political power.

The Attorney General's office suddenly came to life. Within hours, he decided to grant the authority requested of him some seven months earlier, paving the way for the appeal. The national press could not avoid giving voice to this general upsurge.

Meanwhile, the New Cross Massacre Action Committee and the Parents Committee are in the process of organising an International Commission of Inquiry "into all areas of the whole experience — the fire itself, the police investigation, media reporting, the coroner's conduct of the inquest, everything." Professionals, trade unionists, academics, students, workers and unemployed from America, Africa, the Caribbean, Western Europe, Ireland and England have accepted invitations to serve as Commissioners. The Commission will sit in London in late June.

Donations to
New Cross Massacre Action Committee
165 Railton Road, Brixton,
London SE24 OPT
Tel: 01 737 2268

Murder and Riotous Assembly in Croydon

On September 14th, 1981, the committal hearing of 15 young blacks opened at Croydon Magistrates' Court. The youth were arrested and charged as a result of the wide ranging police operation which followed the attack by young blacks on the Wilton Arms, a pub in the Thornton Heath area of Croydon. Minutes after that attack, a white youth, Terence May, was assaulted and died as a result. Seven young blacks are charged with his murder as well as with riotous assembly and affray. The other defendants are charged with riotous assembly or affray; some are charged with both.

The committal hearing was viewed by the Department of Public Prosecutions as a mere formality. In their possession were hundreds of pages of statements implicating the defendants. Nearly all of the statements, which identified the defendants, came from black witnesses. Wooler, the prosecution from the DPP, stated that some of the statements had been taken with black community leaders present. There could be no question of coercion. Wooler outlined the three charges, defined them and then gave his version of what had happened on the evening in question.

Young blacks he said, had gathered at the Parchmore youth club, and from there marched on the Wilton Arms, intimidating whites on the way. On arrival at the Wilton Arms, they sent in an advance reconnaissance party and then launched a full scale attack on the pub. Bricks and poles were hurled through the windows; some blacks entered the pub armed with an axe and rice flails causing injury to the white clientele. When they withdrew from the Wilton, they roamed the area in what the prosecution referred to as an 'orgy of violence'. It was at this point that Terry May was attacked and killed.

From the moment the prosecution introduced live witnesses, the defence

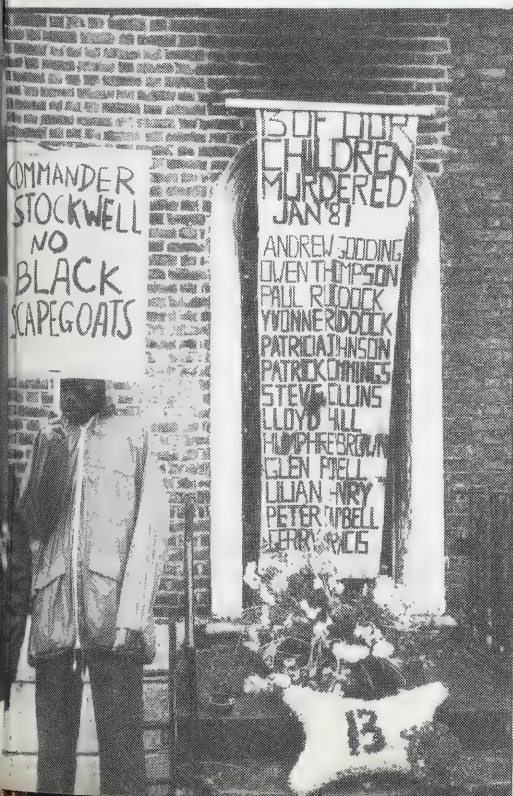
lawyers subjected them to a ruthless, if at times bumbling questioning that was sufficient to seriously damage the credibility of the prosecution's case. A scenario, which included months of violence against blacks by fascist whites from the Wilton Arms, began to emerge.

The DPP repeatedly argued that all this was irrelevant. What should concern the court was the events of May 1st, he said. The defence, to the delight of public gallery and defendants, constantly returned to the events that led to the violent reaction of young blacks.

Owen Price was the first of the black witnesses. He had identified some of the defendants in his statement to the police. On the witness stand, Owen retracted his previous statements. The police had forced him to lie, he stated. The prosecution's case was in tatters. The magistrates stopped the case on October 5th under the pretext that they needed to 'seek advice' from the Lord Chancellor's department. During the break, the DPP applied to the High Court for a voluntary bill of indictment. This was granted by Justice Davies at the Old Bailey on October 25th. The granting of the bill of indictment ended the committal hearing. It removed, from the defendants, the right to hear the case against them, and to have that case tested in open court before the trial proper begins.

An appeal against the bill was heard on November 5th. Telegrams were sent to the judge and a picket mounted outside the court, demanding that the committal hearing be allowed to continue. Giving his judgement on November 6th, Justice Havers turned down the appeal. However, he appeared to acknowledge the precariousness of the prosecution's case by allowing all those charged with murder to be released on bail.

The case begins at the Old Bailey on February 22nd. One way or another it will make history.





ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL.

BY LORINE STAPLETON



Defend Brother Herman and Brother George of Harambee

Harambee was established in 1968 to assist and defend black youth. The organisers arranged visits to prisons, remand homes, detention centres, got solicitors and barristers involved; educated black youth in their own history and culture; and tried to create jobs.

The education programme, which was organised with the black youth, was branded Black Power by Islington, Haringey and Hackney councils. These councils imposed strings on their grants to Harambee who in turn objected and refused the money. Meanwhile, the Manpower Services Commission granted Harambee funds. But war had been declared against Harambee and Brother Herman and Brother George, two of the organisation's mainstays, were accused and charged with fraud involving £25,000. These accusations do not tie up with the fact that Harambee refused £281,000 on principle.

Both defendants will appear in Snaresbrook's Crown Court, Holly Bush Road, London E11, on

Monday, February 1st 1982. They will be entering not guilty pleas. The case is expected to last several weeks and support for Herman and George is a matter of urgency.

Issued by Harambee, Metropolitan Church, Archway London N19. Tel: 01-837 0041.



Deportation

Mumtaz Kiani, a Bradford mother of two, is facing deportation to Pakistan.

Mumtaz first came to England in 1975 as a visitor. Her stay was extended by the Home Office until 1977. Then, she married Mohammad Younis Kiani and was given indefinite leave to stay in the United Kingdom. The Home Office investigated her husband and found that he was a seaman deserter. They deported him in February 1981, and invited Mumtaz to go with him. She declined. The Home Office, nevertheless, decided to deport her, even though they found that there was no deception on her part. She appealed against their decision. The Adjudicator has postponed two hearings to date. Meanwhile, he has sent the case papers back to the Home Office,

advising them that their grounds for deportation were not satisfactory. The Home Office are now required to re-present their case. The Mumtaz Kiani Defence Committee was formed in September 1981 to support Mumtaz in her fight to stay in the United Kingdom. The Defence Committee held a demonstration in Bradford on the 28th November. Further demonstrations are planned for the tribunal hearing. The Committee can be contacted at c/o Fourth Idea Bookshop, 14 Southgate Bradford 1. (Tel: 0274 305927 or 306617).

Pow Shien Leong, a Malaysian woman, is being prevented by the Immigration Authorities from having her son, Chun Hee, join her in Britain. Pow Shein successfully appealed, in 1980, against this decision at the Immigration Tribunal in Leeds. The Home Office, in turn, appealed against the Tribunal's decision and won. Later, Chun Hee won a place as a full-time student at Kitson College. He arrived in England in September 1981 to begin his course and was detained by the immigration authorities. He now faces deportation, despite the fact that his mother is a citizen by birth of the UK and colonies. The Friends of Chun Hee invite support for their campaign to have Chune Hee united with his mother. Contact 'The Friends of Chu Hee', c/o Box L, Leeds LAP, 50 Cockridge Street, Leeds 2.



Police & Courts

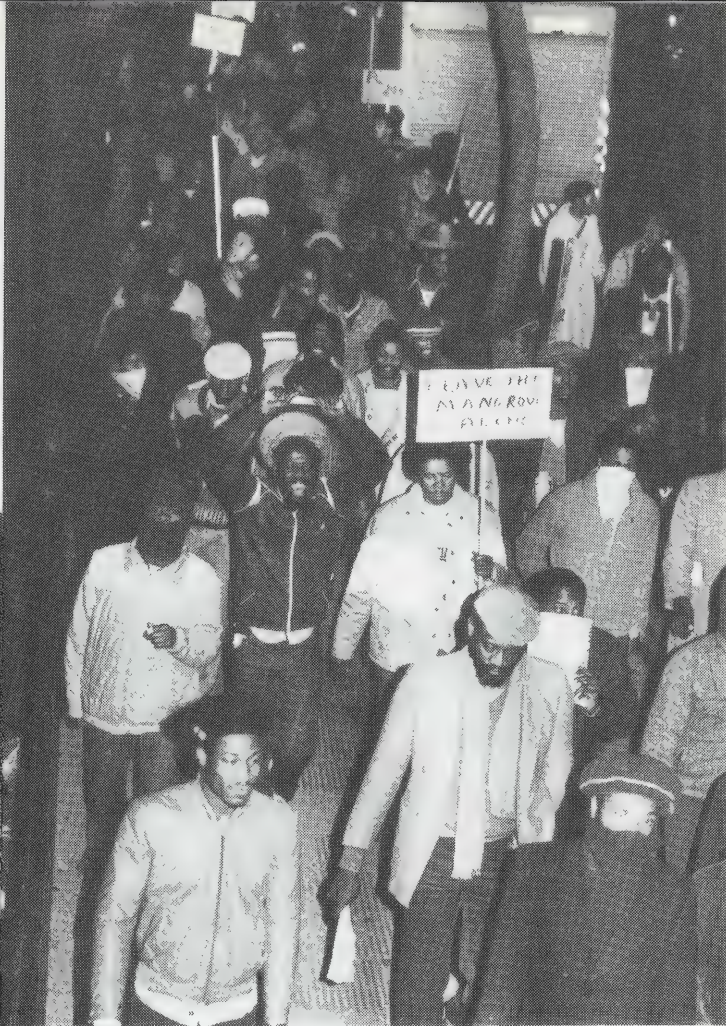
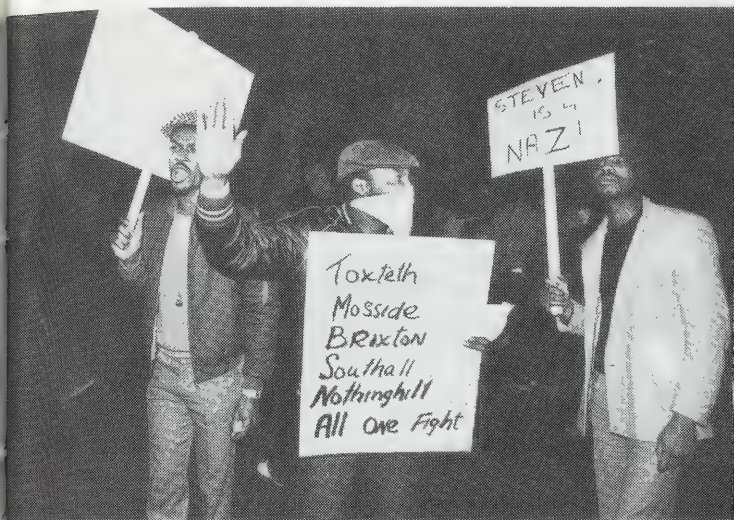
The date for the trial of the Bradford 12 has been fixed for April 26th, 1982 at the Leeds Crown Court. The defendants lost the application to have the case transferred to Bradford. The original charges remain: conspiracy to cause grievous bodily harm, conspiracy to destroy property and endanger life and manufacturing explosive substance with intent to endanger life and property. These charges carry a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. All twelve defendants will plead not guilty. After three months in custody, all twelve were released on stringent bail conditions. One defendant was rearrested on the allegation that he broke a condition of bail. The magistrate disagreed with the police on this.

The July 11th Action Committee has organised several demonstrations and public meetings in support of the twelve. They call for financial donations, trade union and community support. They will provide speakers for public meetings. Contact them at 54 High Street, Southall, London. Tel: 01-571 4920.

HANDS OFF THE MANGROVE

On Christmas Eve, 1981, the Notting Hill police stormed the Mangrove Restaurant dressed in riot gear with shields at the ready.

Six days later, a candlelight picket was held outside the restaurant which then marched to Notting Hill police station, chanting, 'Freedom and Justice', 'Hands off the Mangrove' and 'Stephens Must go' — referring to Inspector Stephens who led the raid. The vibrant picketing outside the station lasted for one-and-a-half hours.



Julian Stapleton

Compensation Claim For George Lindo

George Lindo, the 33 year old Jamaican factory worker from Bradford, is claiming £113,431.54p from the Home Office which has publicly recognised that he was wrongly convicted and imprisoned for over a year for a robbery he never committed. The Home Office appointed an assessor who is expected to announce his figure very shortly.

Immediately after Lindo's arrest in 1977, a successful campaign was mounted around his case which was organised by the George Lindo Action Committee (GLAC). George was released by the Appeal Court on Friday 8th June, 1979. GLAC set up the George Lindo Commission of Inquiry. This consisted of a body of people, both black and white, and in the main from the working class, who met regularly over a period of 18 months to investigate and make recommendations about a number of issues arising out of the Lindo case which gave grave cause for concern. Foremost amongst these was the matter of the financial compensation owed to Lindo because of this dreadful ordeal.

At the time of his arrest, Lindo was the sole financial support of his family—

consisting of his wife Carol, and two infant daughters, Dawn and Rachel. His imprisonment meant loss of earnings not only from his regular daytime employment, but also from his earnings as a part time professional boxer. George's wife, his parents and in-laws spent a great deal of money on prison visits, attendance at various courts, and journeys to London to see solicitors. Expenses were also incurred by GLAC activists. "Special damages" are therefore being claimed to recover these financial losses.

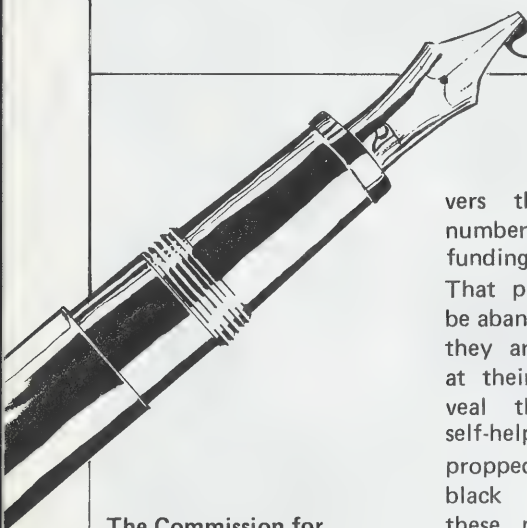
Lindo was convicted by an all white jury on the basis of a statement concocted by Police Constables Jackson and Brierley. A third officer, Detective Sergeant Craven, supervised the 'taking' of the statement. This trio, it later transpired, were specialists in the 'ghosting' of statements which prisoners were then coerced into signing. The imaginative input of this team of crime fiction writers was matched only by their prolific output. Brierley was discovered to have been fabricating statements right left and centre in the notorious

Yorkshire Ripper case. Craven was implicated in the fabrication of a statement in the Elliot rape case. "Exemplary damages" are therefore being claimed from the Home Office to deter individual and institutions under its jurisdiction from behaving in a manner that is "oppressive, arbitrary and unlawful".

Lindo is also claiming compensation for non pecuniary losses, for the damage done to his character and reputation. His wife, Carol, suffered "distinct physical consequences" and his elder daughter, Dawn, was affected by his imprisonment at a critical stage in her development. The family is part of an extensive network of families in the West Indian community in Bradford who rallied round them with moral and material support. Compensation is therefore being sought not only on George's behalf but on behalf of his immediate and extended family.

Three white youths have recently been awarded record compensation after they were wrongly accused and convicted of murder in the Confait case. They were single men with no dependants. It remains to be seen whether the Lindo case will set a precedent whereby not only victims of police malpractice but their families also will become eligible for compensation.

Without Malice



The Commission for Racial Equality

The Commission for Racial Equality has been exposed for its bungling incompetence. This quango had, as its major social and political task, the containment of the rising tide of black revolt. The New Cross Massacre Campaign, together with the summer uprisings, put paid to that dream. Add to these the public trouncing inflicted by the Parliamentary Select Committee and there is no way that David Lane & Co. could continue to justify the use of public funds to finance their whims and fantasies.

Exit Chairman Lane, not without a firm prod from the Home Office. Enter Newsam, the bureaucrat from the Inner London Education Authority. Pleased I am to note that Newsam intends to leave the black community alone, and to concentrate all his forces on the white community. Many of us are breathing sighs of relief.

A word or two of advice for the incoming Chairman. He ought to fire the entire staff. No single quango in the UK boasts such incompetence in the middle and upper echelons. Time ser-

vers they all are. Step number two relates to the funding of self-help groups. That programme ought to be abandoned. Whatever else they are, a cursory glance at their income would reveal that they are not self-help at all but state-propped organisations. If the black community needed these projects, we would raise our own funds to run them. After all, the black churches and much else besides are self financed.

Finally, the local CRCs. These humbugs ought to be disbanded. Imposed as they are from on high, they represent no one, are much hated by local black communities and have become cushions for the most vulgar careerists, busy bodies and political entryists of every hue. Again, the black community has developed and will continue to develop its own organisations through which our voices will be heard. And authentic voices they have been and will continue to be.

Lewisham Community Relations Council

Young Errol Williams and his parents have had a dread experience at the hands of the Lewisham CRC. Errol was targeted as suspect number one in the New Cross Fire enquiry and detained in police custody for two days. At the end of this ordeal he was released into the custody of his mother. Waiting to greet him outside the police station were his mother, his aunt and Mr Rabstein

of the Lewisham CRC. At once Errol informed the group that he signed a false statement under duress. The statement said that there was a fight in the front room of 439 New Cross Road immediately before the fire.

Rabstein promptly invited Errol and his mother to visit the offices of the Lewisham CRC to record his complaint. Errol, accompanied by his mother, visited the offices of Lewisham CRC and made a statement to Mr Rabstein. Asquith Gibbs, CRO at Lewisham warned Mrs Williams then and on several occasions thereafter not to give the statement to the New Cross Massacre Action Committee.

Then came the inquest. Errol was brought from a detention centre to testify. He retracted the statement he gave to the police, explaining that it was signed under duress. Whereupon a hostile coroner threatened him with perjury. The coroner demanded to know why Errol did not complain to some public organisation about his ordeal. Errol, confused as he was, offered no reply. Asquith Gibbs was sitting in court at the time but made no attempt to inform the court that he had, in his possession, a statement of complaint. More than that, he again warned Mrs Williams not to reveal to the Committee and the lawyers the existence of the statement.

The cover-up went further. Following the inquest, insidious reports appeared in the press that the witnesses who retracted their statements were pressured

so to do. The Lewisham CRC's lawyer, McGoldrick, was sure that this was the case. He called for a public enquiry. Rabstein was in a position to clear up this matter. After all Errol had complained to him, within seconds of leaving the station, that his statements were false. To this day, the Communist Party duo of Gibbs & Rabstein have maintained a studied silence.

Exploiting School Leavers

Conscription rides again 24 years after its abolition. Not into the military this time but into the army of labour. Out of the ashes of the failed government Youth Opportunities Programme, there has emerged a new hot bed of youth exploitation. A year's compulsory training for 16 year olds is the most pernicious requirement in the government's new White Paper on Youth Employment. The built-in element of compulsion works like this. When in 1983 a young person leaves school, without a job or a college course, three options are opened to him or her. Stay on at school, live on your wits or join the Youth Training Scheme. Only the last two offer financial rewards, one legal the other not. Presently school leavers can, while seeking work, claim supplementary benefit. In 1983 this will be no more. Presently too, a YOP trainee receives £25 per week. In 1983 this will be cut to £15 with no reduction in the working week.

In Britain's inner cities, young blacks, in the main, are co-erced into YOP schemes by the Careers Office. The new scheme merely legitimises this practice. Let the state beware, however, that the major insurgents in last year's street insurrections are next year's school leavers.

Tic! Tac! Toe!

Bobby to Babylon: Blacks and the British Police

By Darcus Howe

Part 3 Brixton Before The Uprising

In Bobby to Babylon, Part 3, Darcus Howe outlines the history of the struggles between blacks and the police in Brixton up to the spring and summer uprisings.

He identifies the independent, radical movement which combatted police oppression in the '60s and

early '70s and the development of the state's programme to defeat it.

Part 4 will be an account of the Brixton uprising by the insurgents themselves. This together with parts 1, 2 and 3 will be published in late spring as a booklet.



Chris Poole

The Metropolitan police, London, in a confidential report on the uprising of young blacks in Brixton, recorded these grave historical facts:

"Between 6.10pm on Friday, 10th April, 1981 and 11.34pm on Monday, 13th April 1981, during a very warm early spring interlude, serious disorder occurred in the immediate area of Brixton, SW9 within the Greater London Borough of Lambeth when large numbers of persons, predominantly black youths, attacked police, police vehicles (many of which were totally destroyed), attacked the Fire Brigade and damaged appliances, damaged private premises and vehicles, destroyed private premises and vehicles by fire, looted, ransacked and damaged shops, and there is one instance of a white girl being raped in her flat by a black youth whilst the disorder occurred around them.

"During the entire period some 7,472 police officers were used to police the area, some on more than one occasion".

The report goes on to inform that there were 285 arrests, 415 police officers and 172 members of the public injured, 118 police vehicles damaged, 4 police vehicles destroyed, 61 private vehicles damaged, 30 private vehicles destroyed, 158 premises damaged and 28 premises seriously damaged by fire.

Measured by any standards, this revolt assumed serious insurrectionary proportions. From Brixton the revolt snaked its way through Peckham, Southall, Wood Green, Finsbury Park, Woolwich, Forest Gate and Notting Hill in London; to Liverpool, Birkenhead, Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds, Hull, New-

castle and Preston in the north of England, taking in the Midland areas of Coventry, Leicester, Derby, Birmingham and Nottingham. And the south was affected too. Southampton, Cirencester, High Wycombe, Gloucester, Luton, Reading, Aldershot and Cardiff, all experienced the violent revolt of young blacks and whites against the police. The numbers of arrests, the extent of the damage to property and person were multiplied a thousand fold as British society saw no peace until the uprising petered out at the end of July 1981.

The period between April 10th and July 23rd must be taken as a whole, distinguishable, as it was, in range and depth from previous revolts waged by blacks against the police. This general uprising stands heads and shoulders above all that had gone before, and not simply in relation to the historical development of the black working class in Britain. Not since the insurrection of the 1830's — the Chartist Movement — has English society experienced such extensive revolt. Of equal importance is the fact that the uprising represents a massive leap from the late sixties and early seventies when young blacks combined under the Black Power banner to combat police violence and corruption inside the black community.

To investigate, as far as we can, what blacks did and how they did it during this period is to appraise ourselves of the stage that the black movement in Britain has reached and its impact on those sections of the society closest to us. In this way we are able to discover what is likely to develop in the coming period. To know is to be prepared.

It is convenient to isolate the Brixton uprising for our purposes, precisely because much of what took place in other cities was contained in the Brixton revolt.

BRIXTON BEFORE THE UPRISING

The revolt of Brixton's young blacks against the police did not begin when the media and the rest of British society discovered it on the weekend of April 10th to April 13th. In the last ten years, young blacks in Brixton engaged the local police in minor skirmishes, organised protests, violent street confrontations and hand to hand fighting in youth clubs and other social haunts. Add to these the string of one to one incidents, characterised by the hostility and violent outbursts of the participants. Much of this history has taken place behind the backs of the rest of British society, often unrecorded except as a sensational one off event. Recorded, they were, by the mean statisticians at Scotland Yard, but never as information from which others may arrive at objective analyses and recommendations, but

always as vulgar propaganda aimed at bolstering up the image of the British police, always aimed at preparing public opinion for the introduction of, say, the Special Patrol Group in yet another assault on the black community. It is directly out of this history that the contending forces burst forth on the national and international stage on that fateful spring weekend in April 1981.

November 22, 1970 marked a significant turning point in this struggle. Joshua Francis worked at London Transport and lived in Brixton. On that day, in November 1970, the normal routine in the life of this middle aged West Indian was brutally interrupted. Four white men, one of them an off duty police officer, stormed into his home and assaulted him, opening wounds which required 30 stitches.

The Brixton police arrived, carted Mr Francis off to Brixton police station and charged him with assaulting three police officers. The attack on Joshua Francis was an unusual occurrence, the police reaction was not.

The West Indian community had, until then, developed a practice in dealing with experiences of this kind, a practice no different from that which obtained in the society at large. They sought the advice of the local, voluntary organisation of their islandic grouping, or the Citizens Advice Bureau, or maybe the local vicar who would, in turn, act as ushers to some local firm of solicitors. If not, they walked into a legal firm on the High Street or were touted for a firm of solicitors in the corridors of the Magistrates Court. The touts were mainly police officers who, it has been alleged, received 'back-handers' for their recommendations and were ensured co-operation in convicting the defendants. The radical lawyer, black or white, with the inclination to challenge police evidence, did not exist then. Convictions came thick and fast, hastened by the tendency among magistrates to rubber stamp police evidence. The most extreme action undertaken by the West Indian community entailed a complaint to the local Member of Parliament or to Scotland Yard. Such complaints invariably came to nothing. We lived that way for close to 15 years, overwhelmed by the weight of tradition that the British police were the best in the world and suffocated by institutions whose instincts were to reproduce that tradition.

THE PANTHERS

Joshua Francis broke away, and assisting him on a new course were members of the Black Panther Movement, based at 38 Shakespeare Road, in Brixton. Young blacks in Brixton had, a couple of years earlier, formed themselves into the Black Panther Movement. The membership was overwhelmingly working class with a sprinkling of intellectuals. At their height, the Panthers numbered close to 300 active members. They declared themselves opposed to police malpractice and published a newspaper which reflected a militant stance on this question. The paper was distributed from door to door in Brixton and in the main shopping centre to which flocked black Brixtonians and other blacks from the surrounding South London black community. The Panthers held public meetings, sold radical and revolutionary literature, demonstrated and agitated in an effort to mobilise public vigilance and alertness with regard to the Brixton police. They demanded, too, that arrested blacks be tried by a

jury of their peers.

Nor was their platform that narrow. They drew up the battle lines on the education and housing fronts; they placed the struggles of Africans against Portuguese colonialism before the local community; they mobilised in support of Caribbean liberation struggles; they hoisted their banners on the Irish civil rights demonstrations; they were solid, they said, in their support for the Palestinian liberation struggles. Internally, they debated the pitfalls of nationalism and teased at Marxism and its various Chinese interpretations. It was a movement, distinguishable from previous forms, by its revolutionary vibrancy.

But the central issue remained the malpractices carried out against Brixton's black community by the police. On this score, the Panthers introduced the local black community to an alternative to the barren and bankrupt approaches which characterised the preceding period.

Joshua Francis placed his case in the hands of the Panthers, and they at once set about organising a campaign on his behalf. It was, perhaps, one of the first of such campaigns recorded in the history of the struggles between blacks and the Brixton police.

'Freedom News', the journal of the Black Panther Movement, recorded the event as follows:

"Since the attack on the life of Brother Joshua Francis, the Black Panther Movement has been organising a campaign to involve the community in demanding justice for brother Joshua and **an inquiry into the activities of the Brixton police, who have been allowed to mount these attacks on black people**" (my emphasis).

'Freedom News' linked two similar events to illustrate the point:

"In 1967 a Brother Campbell was dragged from a bus on Brixton Road and beaten unconscious in broad daylight."

And again:


"In November 1969, three brothers and a sister were again beaten, one of them (Bro Tex) received a broken arm. Black people in the [Brixton] market were protesting against an unwarranted attack on a Nigerian diplomat."

Later on, the journal drew our attention to the attitude of the judiciary and Joshua Francis' lawyer.

"These criminal activities of the police have again been upheld with

ACT NOW

FREE JOSHUA FRANCIS FROM PRISON



JOSHUA FRANCIS, A WEST INDIAN WORKER, WAS VICIOUSLY ATTACKED WHILE SICK IN BED ON NOV. 22 1970 BY BRIXTON POLICE AND THEIR CIVILIAN FRIENDS. HE WAS CONVICTED BY AN ALL WHITE JURY AND SENT TO PRISON ON FEB. 22. 1972.

DEMAND

(1) HIS RELEASE AND ACQUITTAL ON ALL CHARGES AT A COURT OF APPEAL.
(2) THAT THE POLICE AND OTHER THUGS RESPONSIBLE BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL.

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ORGANISED BY THE ACTION COLLECTIVE FOR THE DEFENCE OF JOSHUA FRANCIS

the conviction of Bro Joshua whose defence lawyer refused to raise the political issues involved in the case. The response of one barrister to a request by Joshua to have black people on the jury was met with the question, Are you mad?"

The campaign involved pickets of the courts, a public demonstration, public meetings and the publication and dissemination of reams of leaflets. All Brixton knew about Joshua Francis' case. All Brixton, black and white, were being introduced to a new and revolutionary approach to a long standing problem. The responses were by no means uniform. Young blacks were unreservedly for this new approach, older West Indian workers expressed a cautious wait-and-see attitude, while offering a reserved sympathy. Working class whites were in the main skeptical, but by no means unalterably opposed. This approach was not confined to Brixton. In almost every black community in the country, groups emerged using the Panther organisation as a model. These organisations gave voice to the rising tide of youth revolt.

British rulers had maintained that young blacks, who were born or grew up here, would follow the social pattern laid down for their parents. Young blacks, they hoped, would meekly accept those jobs that whites refused to do; they would bow, bend before and make accommodations with their employers; they would be hesitant and cautious in their opposition to police malpractice. Undoubtedly, some did, but the major tendency among the youth was a rejection, a total and militant rejection to these established ways of immigrant life.

A section of young blacks refused to take up the traditional immigrant jobs and settled for permanent unemployment. When they did accept jobs they forced their employers into a stunned acceptance of their militant attitudes; they opposed the police with a violent and uncompromising hostility. The balance of power, which had settled uneasily in favour of the police, experienced a severe jolt.

These organisations of the Black Power period coalesced into a national formation at the National Conference



on the Rights of Black People held in the spring of 1971 at the Alexandra Palace. More than 800 representatives of the different organisations were present. The movement had reached its peak after a period of five to six years.

A combination of a black movement in its formative stages and the rise of Powellism prompted Harold Wilson, then Prime Minister, to make the following remarks during a speech on the steps of Birmingham Town Hall on May 5th, 1968.

"That tragic and intractable phenomenon which we watched with horror on the other side of the Atlantic [burning cities in the USA] but which there is interwoven with history and existence of the States itself, is coming upon us here by our own volition and our own neglect. Indeed, it has all but come. In numerical terms, it will be of American proportions long before the end of the century."

Later on in 1971, the black movement,

now at its peak and with a massive youth following, Harold Wilson again intervenes,

"This century, with a loss of millions of lives, has underlined the fact that democracy survives as long as it is fought for. It is challenged today across the Atlantic. It is for us, living in the home of Parliamentary democracy to decide how we respond to their challenge here in Britain."

We cannot ignore the alarmist aspect of Wilson's speeches. There was no threat to democracy in Britain, however serious the problem. And the parallel with America was as baseless as it was vulgar. It was typical Wilsonian cynicism — a dramatic presentation of the problem to conceal a complete lack of creative social policy.

The black community in Brixton experienced two aspects of state reaction to the youth revolt. Firstly the stick. Panther members were harassed by the Brixton police at every turn. They were picked up as they sold their

literature and distributed leaflets. Their headquarters and fundraising functions were raided. They were arrested and charged indiscriminately as they pursued their campaigns. On the eve of the Conference on the Rights of Black People, Special Branch officers raided the headquarters at 38, Shakespeare Road in Brixton and rifled the organisation's files. For months on end the Panthers were bogged down in court cases involving their members and supporters. And this repression was repeated throughout those areas where local groups were firmly established.

This period of repression generated the most debilitating consequences. Membership dwindled, and new recruits were hard to come by. Enthusiastic support mellowed into passive sympathy. After all, only the most finely honed ideological maturity could withstand such an onslaught, and the Panthers were not quite there.

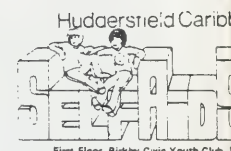
Then came the carrot. The government had unfurled their Urban Aid Programme in 1968, at first, without much impact. Slowly, they filtered

small sums of money into the black community aimed, they said, at ameliorating the problems of young blacks. The programme was conceived in the Home Office Children's Department and its major thrust was the social control of young blacks in revolt. The funds cascaded, eventually, under the Inner City Partnership and the Community Relations Self-Help programme. Millions of pounds have been poured into the black communities. By 1973, these radical Black Power organisations, now considerably weakened by state repression, crumbled before this onslaught of government funds. Young cadres, once headed for the Panthers, now gathered around government financed projects. Organisations, which were once autonomous and politically vibrant, were now transformed into welfare agencies which extended the crippling welfare state into every area of the black existence.

The Panthers and much else besides fell into decline. But their impact on Brixton was enormous. For five years Brixton had experienced an intense radical politics. Young blacks were introduced, for the first time, to advanced political organisation and ideas. The militant and organised opposition to the police had percolated down to

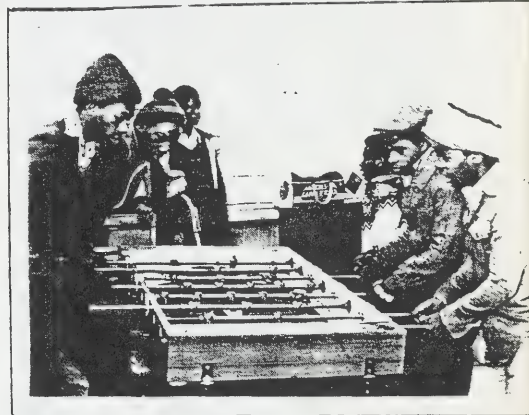


Black Unity supports the Self-Help Scheme which we feel is fulfilling an important role. It is doing a good job and we hope the grants will be forthcoming in order that the various projects will be realised.



First Floor, Birkby Civic Youth Club, 1

the very base of the community from which the original inspiration had come. The links had been made nationally, and international concerns were tied into local preoccupations. Then there were those who could link this radical upsurge to its foundations in the anti colonial movement which dominated Caribbean politics in the pre and post Second World War period. The Panthers had left their mark on Brixton. The community would never be the same again.



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SCARMAN AND AFTER

16-18 April, 1982

A three day conference on the Scarman Report. Speakers include:

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Fees: Residential £55, Non-residential £42. Limited number of bursaries available to community groups.

Details from: Mrs K. B. Penny, Department of Adult Education, University of Leicester, Leicester LE1 7RH. Tel: 0533 554455 ext. 242.

Part 2

The rulers of British society were busily reforming the colonial mould inside which the black population's confinement had to be perpetuated. We were here to labour. Factory managers and their foremen and women saw to it at the work place. The police stood guard in our communities to ensure social obedience, order and discipline. The Irish, the Scots, the Welsh, varied assortments of European immigrants had been processed in this way. It was our turn now.

The Panthers had cracked that mould and replastering was on the order of the day in Brixton as it was in Notting Hill, Moss Side, Leeds and other inner city areas where blacks were residing and reproducing themselves.

First on the agenda was the fortification of police power. The government set about a technological revolution in policing. A wide range of new gadgetry for surveillance, increased mobility and physical brutality was made available to the police. Specially constructed police stations replaced the traditional buildings. Administrative manipulation and case law extended police powers. The Association of Chief Constables, the feudal barons who run Britain's police forces, exercised a power and authority in relation to governments which bordered on the unconstitutional. Locked in committees behind closed doors in Whitehall, this body demanded and got from government literally what they wanted. Their power owed much to the fact that successive governments, lacking in policy in regard to the escalation of unemployment among young blacks, relied exclusively on the police to contain this section of the population which increased in numbers by the day.

It is no exaggeration to note that thousands and thousands of young blacks have grown up in British society having little contact with any other section of British society but the police and courts. They have developed in the shadow of the SPG, the Vice Squad, the Flying Squad, the Starskys and Hutches of the panda car brigade, the Old Bailey, Inner London Sessions etc. These young blacks spend a major portion of their day contemplating, plotting, planning and scheming against the advance of police power and judicial extremities.

And it is police power devoid of the traditional constraints. By and large the traditional vigilance through which democratic Britain had contained police power and indiscipline was exchanged for free licence. An economic recession

was at hand, the blacks were stirring and the Irish had given an indication of how tensions in the United Kingdom would develop. Fearful of the impending revolt and lacking in a social and political policy, which would involve young blacks in the development of British society, successive governments gave full reign to the coercive powers. The police proceeded, with their confidence growing by the day, to trample wildly over the rights of the black community all this behind the backs of society at large. Judges and magistrates provided uncritical support for the most unorthodox of police methods.

This unrestrained licence, which the police enjoyed, had disastrous consequences within the force itself. The technological revolution undermined all internal structures; the ensuing lack of control plunged the police into the most damnable corruption. Take note of these statistics: Between 1969 and 1972 a score of London detectives went to gaol and hundreds more left the force in disgrace. Even the most conservative fanatic could not deny that this was the tip of the iceberg. An entire elite drug squad appeared in the dock at the Old Bailey when a drug ring comprising police officers of the Drug Squad and black drug dealers was exposed. Most of the black dealers were Brixton based. Not a month passes without some investigation into any one of the police forces in the country. In 1980 close to seven such investigations were proceeding at the same time. And the most damnable corruption of all triggered Operation Countryman which sought to

investigate the complicity of police officers in bank robbery, extortion and murder.

That story needs to be told. Operation Countryman was set up in late 1978 to conduct a wide ranging investigation into Scotland Yard and the CID

FREEDOM

SPECIAL STRIKE ISS

Published by Black Workers Movement (F)

FREEDOM NEWS

PUBLISHED BY BLACK WORKERS MOVEMENT
38 SHAKESPEARE ROAD SE 24
18th November 1973

BLACK WORKERS END TO RACE STANDARD

TO NO RACISM

FERNDALE TENANT IN ACT

FREEDOM NEWS

south london community bulletin

EVERY WEEK FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION 9 JUNE, 1974

PUBLISHED BY THE BLACK WORKERS MOVEMENT (Formerly The Black Panther Movement)

Black workers take a stand

Black workers in Guy's Hospital have taken a firm stand against racism and victimisation. They decided to take action after a black woman was asked by a supervisor. She was told her work was not good enough and that a complaint had been made against her by someone else. This was later discovered to be a lie.

A year ago black workers took similar action over management's attempts to sack a West Indian orderly. And now, urgent talks have been held with the bosses. A union official of C.O.N.S.E. said that the hospital of the 150 members of the union if the staff who are responsible for taking patients to the theatre for operations and who are responsible for cleaning fail to turn up for work on Friday.

The National Press, as we tried to twist the line of public opinion against just struggle. For instance, headlines of the London Evening Standard "Guy's Hospital workers to halt surgery" is typical.

(Next week FREEDOM NEWS will have a report of the development of struggle with an interview with workers at Guy's)

On Monday 12th November, 1973 the tenants association of the disgusting conditions of the flats in the same site are also in the same site. There were about fifty of housing department on Br and occupied it for about the children perished the barrier set up by C. "WE WANT DECENT HOUSING" the mothers and children not given a moment's rest for an explanation for a big bid at the house of the Council, they can afford. No

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, AS THE SITUATION IN THE WORLD DEVELOPS, THE COMMUNITIES IN THIS COUNTRY DEVELOP WITH IT. WE HAVE DIFFERENT PROBLEMS IN THIS COUNTRY DEVELOP WITH IT. WE FACE THE SAME PROBLEMS IN NEW FORMS. WE FIND NEW WAYS OF STRUGGLE TO IMPROVE THE OLD. DU OF THE HISTORY AND LIFE THAT BLACK PEOPLE FROM ASIA AND THE CARIBBEAN HAVE HAD, AND OUR POSITION IN THIS COUNTRY. OUR ORGANISATIONS TO FULFILL SOME OF THE NEEDS OF OUR STRUGGLE. BLACK PANTHER MOVEMENT HAS WORKED IN BLACK COMMUNITIES AND BEEN PART OF THEIR STRUGGLE FOR A LONG TIME. WE FEEL THAT THE TIME HAS COME TO ORGANISE UNDER A NEW NAME. WE HAVE AGREED TO CALL OURSELVES BLACK WORKERS MOVEMENT. OUR REASONS FOR THIS PART OF GROWTH ARE BRIEFLY SET OUT ON BACK PAGE.

BLACK PEOPLES INFORMATION CENTRE, 38 SHAKESPEARE ROAD SE 24, LONDON SE24 8JN. TEL: 01-871 1111. OUR AIM IS TO UNIFY THROUGH INFORMATION, THE DAILY EXPERIENCE OF BLACK PEOPLE IN THIS AREA WITH BLACK PEOPLE ALL OVER BRITAIN. WITH SUFFERING BLACK PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD. WE ARE OPEN FOR VISITS FROM 6pm-9pm. BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH OTHER BLACK PEOPLE SHOULD COME ALONG OR PHONE: 01-871 1111.





Above: Courtney Laws

Left: Roy Jenkins on a visit to Brixton in 1975.



The operation revealed corruption of a serious nature at the highest echelons of the police force, up to the level of Assistant Commissioner. The government panicked at the prospect of a mass revelation of the facts and wound down the investigation after spending 3 million pounds on it. Only a handful of junior officers has been prosecuted. All this in full view of the black population. Revelations of police corruption did not serve to educate the black community, simply to confirm that what they were experiencing had spread like a cancer, poisoning relations between the police and other sections of society.

A refurbished public relations department, based at Scotland Yard, just came to public view in 1968. They juggled with statistics, manipulated the press, were allowed unlimited access to the media in a consistent slander on the black community. They cosseted every chauvinistic instinct in the indigenous population, gave voice to every meaningless scheme concocted by the cynics who run police forces in the country, elevated, to dramatic proportions, the slightest injury suffered by a police officer in the execution of his duty. They trotted out the wives, the children and the mothers to brighten up the facade. Behind all this graft, corruption and illegality prevailed.

And for 10 years, there has been little overt, consistent political opposition coming from the black community. It has been a veritable desert with only the odd moments of political offensive. And what is the cause? We need a thorough examination here.

Side by side with the increase of police power ran the development of black compromise. Out of the ashes of the Panthers, there emerged the proliferation of a whole host of state financial projects. In Brixton the dying organisation of Jamaican nationals, which had declined along with the practice of ushering defendants to solicitors and forulating complaints to Scotland Yard and Members of Parliament, received a new lease of life. A strong injection of government funds transformed this carcass into the Brixton Neighbourhood Centre, which reinstituted the old approach. Staffed by blacks, they would repeat the worn out formulae of yesteryear. The higgledy piggedly arrangement, which was the Railton Youth Club, was thrown at once into the vanguard of modernity. The Melting Pot Foundation struck gold and launched into youth hostels, a mystification for the ghettoisation of young blacks. Later, Sabarr Books staked its claim to a small fortune. The Abeng Centre, the Black Ink Collective, the Black Women's Group, the Brixton Law Centre and the local Community Relations Council appeared as the outer layer of the replastered colonial mould.

And who are these folks who have been drawn into sustaining colonial social relations here in Brixton? Firstly, there are those who perceive themselves as a cut above the ordinary labourer. Failed businessmen and women of the older generation, they have sought social elevation by way of government grants. They are immersed in venality and ruthless in their fraudulent acquisition of government funds for personal use. What is important here is not the moral issue. It is that the police, the government and those agencies, who parcel out government funds, are fully aware of these types and what they do. But official society needs them and is willing to use them.

Then there are the born again blacks who are distinguishable from the mass of blacks by educational attainment. And here I refer to those who are unable to take 5 GCE 'O' levels in their stride. Among them, a university degree conjures up expectations of the most grandiose kind. Meritocrats they all are. Plunged into the fiercely competitive world of the meritocracy, they cry racial discrimination at the slightest opportunity in order to cover up their individual inadequacies. They have retreated into the world of black projects, a terrain which they guard ferociously at the slightest sign of white encroachment. They sound radical enough, but on close inspection their hostility to the white working class disguises an even greater hostility to its black counterpart.

throughout London. The officers, who staffed the Countryman team, were recruited from West Country police forces. These officers were obstructed at every turn by the senior police officers in London, the Home Office and the Department of Public Prosecutions.

For the past 10 years, here in Brixton, they have abjured all political campaigns, all militant stances on the police question.

And finally the political entryists. These projects, they hope, will provide access to rebellious blacks from which they would attempt the recruitment of members for the Labour Party, the Communist Party, the International Marxist Group, the Socialist Workers Party et al.

It is from this milieu that the police have managed to draw assistance for a propaganda coup which has succeeded in pulling the wool over the eyes of sections of the host society for 10 years. The name of the game has been the police liaison committee. Gathered in this empty shell are police officers and representatives of projects; there to discuss relations between blacks and the police with regard to the improvement of such relations.

It is the most vulgar whitewash. The police representatives are not representing the police and the black representatives are not representing the black community. It is merely a cloak to cover up the continuing, escalation of the struggle between the police and the black community. What amazes is the fact that official society staked all and continues so to do on this meaningless exercise.

By the mid 1970's the new social arrangement had been established. Policing had been revolutionised, police power had been afforded free licence and a section of the black community emerged from the ashes of the Panthers to give some impression that something positive was at hand. They proceeded to the eighties arm in arm with the police on their liaison committees. Those who stayed away from these committees kept within those limits which ensured that next year's grant was safe.

The replastered mould, the new social arrangement meant that there was little possibility of a Joshua Francis campaign recurring. From the mid seventies and after, those who suffered experiences similar to Joshua Francis went to the Law Centre, the Brixton Neighbourhood Centre, Railton Youth Club, the Abeng or St Matthews. No campaign resulted, militancy was out of the question. Where previously the Panthers linked Francis' case with Campbell's, with Bro Tex and others, the projects kept each case in its little cubicle. Each experience was atomised never to jell into an organic and vibrant organisational movement. This atomisation led to a ten year period of organisational paralysis.

Meanwhile, several profound changes were taking place within the mould it-

self. The sharpening of the economic recession increased the numbers of young blacks who could not find jobs. Their presence on the streets heightened the conflict between them and the police. The very existence of these various projects teased the black community into expectations which delivered no change whatever, with the result that the most intense passions were being concentrated inside the mould itself. From time to time those passions exploded into open violence. Who better to articulate these moments than the police themselves? In a memorandum to the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration, March 1976, Scotland Yard made the following admission:

"Recently there has been a growth in the tendency for members of London's West Indian communities to combine against police by interfering with police officers who are effecting the arrest of a black person or who are in some way enforcing the law in situations which involve black people. In the last 12 months 40 such incidents have been recorded. Each carries a potential for large scale disorder. . . Experience indicates that they are more likely to occur during the summer months and that the conflict invariably is with young West Indians. They can occur anywhere in the Metropolitan Police District, but are of course more likely in those areas which have a high proportion of West Indian settlers".

The historical moment could not have been more clearly described. The demise of the Panthers meant that the black community in Brixton had been deprived of and outmanoeuvred out of an

organisational framework through which they could express their revolt politically, through which they could link their experiences with others nationally and internationally. This did not mean revolt was at an end. Revolt was alive and kicking and living in Brixton.

On the evening of June 19th 1973, young blacks clashed with police in Brockwell Park Fair. Bottles, stones, just about any available missile was thrown at the police. The police called for reinforcements and so did young blacks. The battle raged for half an hour. In those circumstances the police grab and arrest who is at hand. Whether you were fighting or not is irrelevant. Robin Sterling, a young student at Tulse Hill Comprehensive School, once a nursery for the Black Panther Movement, was arrested. He was innocent of the charges of assault on police so too were Horace Parkinson and Lloyd James. At the end of the day, all three were sent to prison.

Tulse Hill Comprehensive School had retained, in a small organisation, the Brixton Collective, the Panther tradition. They raised a campaign for the freedom of Robin Sterling under the slogans, 'Move as a Community'. 'School today, Jail Tomorrow'. Robin was eventually freed on appeal, not before the Brockwell Three Defence Committee, the creation of the Brixton Collective, had staged a successful strike of school students and a massive demonstration in the South London area.

Within weeks there followed violent clashes between young blacks and the SPG at the Railton Youth Club. Hand to hand fighting ensued. Then, in September 1974, young blacks again took on the police at the Swan Disco. One month later the exact scene reproduced itself at Stockwell Tube Station. Again in



June 1976, close to 100 blacks spontaneously marched on Brixton Police Station following a wrongful arrest of a middle aged West Indian on Railton Road.

The British government had one solitary reply to this phenomenon which reproduced itself in several black communities up and down the country. Clashes would be followed by intensive police investigations. Such investigations involving the wringing of confessions and statements from participants. Case papers would be sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions who returned charges of Riot and Affray.

From Notting Hill to Wood Green, from Leeds to Bristol the formula was the same.

The projects sat on case after case ushering young blacks through a maze of judicial procedure, their friends, parents and relatives providing a passive audience for the performing circus of lawyers. This has been the dominant tendency in the black community for the last decade. Young blacks would fight with great courage and when called to order by the state through its courts,

the projects relegated them to the back seat and placed the radical lawyer at the helm.

The confidence and social growth which an involvement in political campaigns brings were denied young blacks and their parents, introducing young blacks, particularly to the violence of despair. Wherever the opposite tendency prevailed (and this was on rare occasions) it has been remarkably successful. The campaign to free north London student, Cliff McDaniel in 1975 led to the formation of the Black Parents Movement and the Black Student Movement. The campaign to free George Lindo established strong foundations among the West Indian community in Bradford. Similar campaigns in Leeds and Manchester generated like successes.

Not until the New Cross Fire was political campaigning returned to the position of centrality which it occupied in the days of the Panthers and other similar groupings. The gusto and enthusiasm with which the black community gathered in their thousands indicated the extent to which they had been frustrated by the projects from

expressing themselves politically.

They were free at last. The mould had once more been shattered. Black Brixtonians walked the streets of Brixton with the confidence that a new era was at hand. They were prepared for Operation Swamp 81.



Julian Stapleton

The New Tide Of Court Protest

BY IAN MACDONALD

In 1964, the public were officially alerted to the fact that a number of police officers, led by a Sergeant Challenor at the West End Central police station in London, had gotten into the habit of planting weapons and other nasty things on accused persons. As a result, the authorities got rid of him and jailed other officers. Ex-Sergeant Challenor is, by now, a legend of police abuse of power. What is less well known is the extent to which the attitude of the judges lent weight and support to his nefarious activities.

In one of the cases in which Challenor planted weapons on the accused, the judge, in convicting the men, "thought it is a pity that people charged with criminal offences like this (should) obtain free representation, thus having their cases argued persuasively by clever lawyers."

In another case, arising out of the same incidents, Mr Ewen Montagu, the Chairman of Middlesex Sessions, in dismissing an appeal and increasing sentence, announced: "We are absolutely satisfied that there is not a vestige of truth in their (the accused's) account of what happened".

As the true facts emerged, both these

judges were proven miserably wrong.

One of the reasons why the police continue to flaunt and abuse their power is that, by and large, they have every confidence that when they appear before magistrates, their word, rather than the accused's, will be believed. It is also fairly clear that the police prefer to have cases dealt with by magistrates rather than have them sent before juries, where the chances of acquittal are much greater.

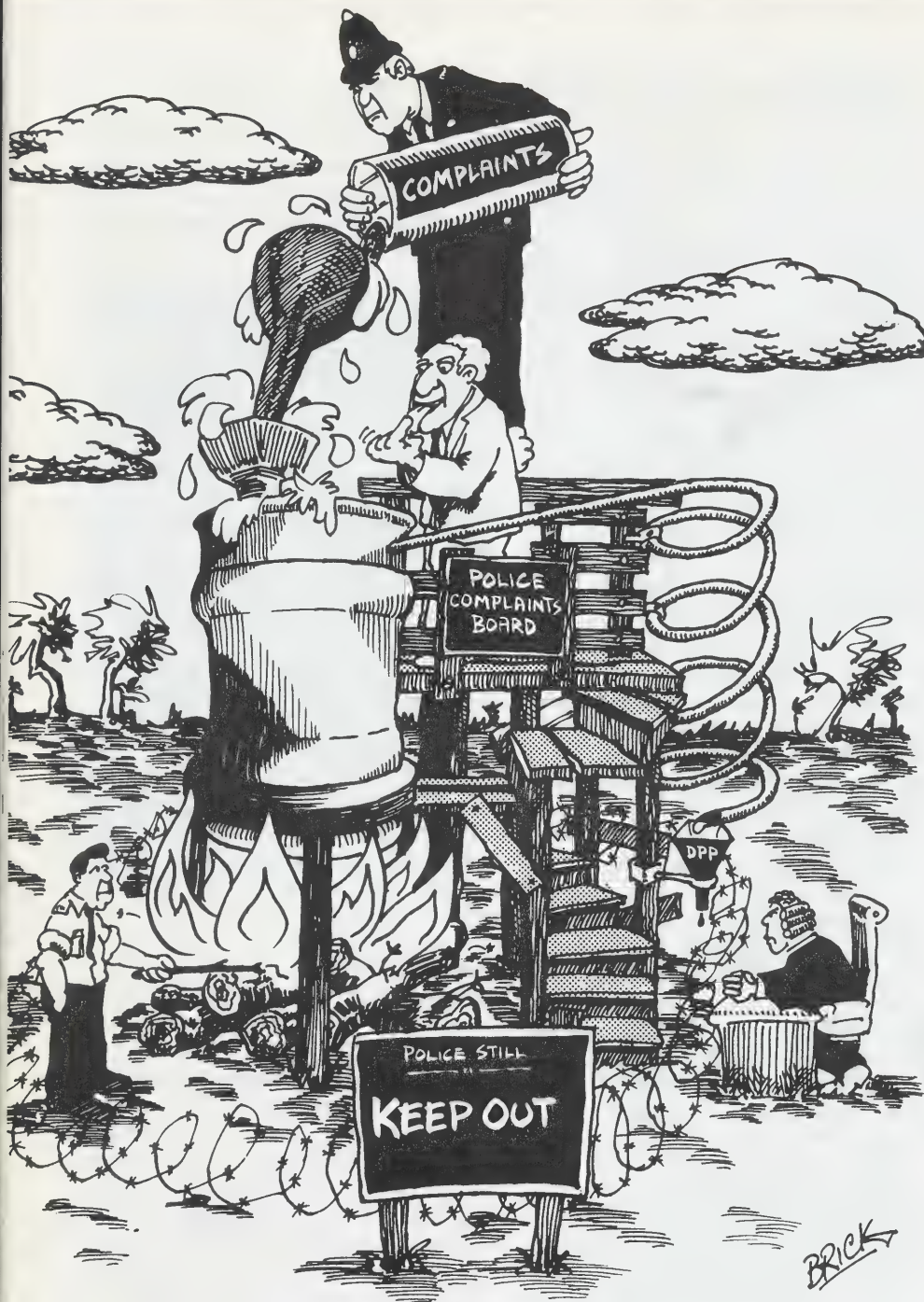
Why should this be so? There are a number of reasons. First, the routine and structure of the Courts must leave the impression that the police are usually right. In something like 60% of the cases that go to Crown Court, the accused pleads guilty. In Magistrates Courts, which handles something like 97% of all criminal cases it has been estimated that something like 82% to 87% of accused plead guilty. Whether they are guilty is another question, but undoubtedly the overall view magistrates must get is that in nearly all cases the police are right.

Secondly, magistrates will frequently see the same police appearing before them, and so when it comes to a contested case, they are more likely to believe those they know.

Thirdly, they are both essentially on the same side, both upholders of law and order, and both subscribing to the same sort of values, especially in times of riot, commotion and rebellion. In the old days, it was in fact the magistrates who had the responsibility of reading the Riot Act and ordering the crowd to disperse. The links have never been lost.

However, there is a need to be careful with this scenario. At best it represents an ever-present tendency. But the situation is not fixed or static, and it is misleading to depict a relationship between police and courts, which assumes that defendants and those who suffer from crime are mere victims, powerless to affect the interplay between courts and police.

This is the mistake which most legal and political commentators make. They assume that the only self-active protagonists are the police, lawyers, justice and political activists. When dealing with defendants they will tell you only of their powerlessness; for example, how innocent people plead guilty because they don't think their word will stand against that of the police, because their lawyers tell them to plead guilty,



because they think the police will put in a good word for them, because they will only get fined and need lose no more than half a day off work, because the judge will get angry if they call the police liars, and so forth.

The powerlessness of defendants is an important aspect of the court scene, but so is the active rebelliousness which is so much more obvious today than it was (say) 15 years ago. In October 1980, for example, four black youth were given six year gaol sentences for making petrol bombs. Immediately, all four jumped out of the dock and tried to make their escape. In July 1981, police had to fight a pitched battle in a Wolverhampton Court with 40 youngsters after two of their friends were refused bail. The magistrate had to be given a police escort home.

Courts are no longer the places of tidy collusion they once were, between lawyers, police and bench. And it is not just defendants, their families, and friends who are up in arms. Victims of crime, especially of crimes of violence against women and of racist attacks, are organising and taking their protest across the once-hallowed doors of the Court room. Witness the New Cross fire inquest and the recent protest against a fine imposed on a rapist.

The interplay between police and Court is much affected by this new and growing assertion of power. Undoubtedly, magistrates haven't yet achieved the necessary scepticism of police evidence, but they are more prepared to find technical fault with the prosecution case. Maybe, judges still believe that laws to protect banks from robbery and the

DHSS from being defrauded are more important than laws to prevent the spread of racist hatred or to protect black people from arson attacks or women from rape, but they are now aware that if they wish an acquitted fascist good luck or send a rich rapist home with a fine all hell will let loose, and it won't just be the paper protest of the MP's and official watchdog bodies.

I believe that most of the people connected with the administration of the Courts and the laws are somewhat bewildered by this new show of collective power in the Courts. It is getting too frequent and widespread. No longer the occasional isolated outburst. And it's also people organising to make the law provide the protection which they expect of it.

In the main institutions concerned with the law, the State's propaganda is that they are independent of class interest and completely impartial. The ideology is so deeply imbued that it is difficult for these institutions to react when, on the surface, all they are being asked to do is to hold good to their word. Be good bourgeois judges. Stop abuses of power by the police and give us the protection to which the law says we are entitled. What do they do? Throw 300 years of the rule of law down the drain? Accede? Make gestures of good will towards the protests while secretly preparing for a military takeover? Modernise the contempt of court laws in order to exercise tighter control in the Court itself? All are possibilities. Only the last has been done, though the effect of the new contempt laws is as yet unclear.

The real problem is that if notions of freedom and liberty are given too much acclaim in a class society, they become subversive and make the task of ruling and controlling that much more difficult. As one anonymous author of a eighteenth century pamphlet put it in his 'Essay on Trade and Commerce':

"Our population have adopted a notion, that as Englishmen, they enjoy a birthright privilege of being more free and independent than in any country in Europe. Now this idea, as far as it may affect the bravery of our troops, may be of some use; but the less the manufacturing poor have of it, certainly the better for themselves and the State."

I mean to say, they may even get ideas that they should have a say in the disposition of the police, the running of the Courts, and the disappearance of the State. Exactly.

IAN MACDONALD



The Left, Liberals and the Police

by Eric Huntley.

I admit to being one of those older West Indians who emigrated to this country during the 1950's. Before coming here, I worked as a postman in what was then called British Guiana. It is now Guyana. I was a founding member of the Peoples Progressive Party and was imprisoned in the 1955/56 period when the British Government suspended the constitution and imposed a state of emergency in the territory. In all the Caribbean territories, there were hundreds like myself, activists, who were at the heart of the anti-colonial movement which blossomed before and after the Second World War. Many of us emigrated to Britain when that movement fell into decline.

Among the many preconceptions we had of Britain was that there existed a body of opinion here which supported our aspirations and struggles for self government and independence. The most well known of the organisations which reflected that opinion were the Communist Party, elements within the Labour Party and the Movement for Colonial Freedom.

We therefore came to Britain with a certain feeling, and that was all it was, that we could 'fall back' on that support in the event of any critical situation which would face us in this country. We would not, as it were, be thrown to the wolves.

That support turned out to be very limited indeed when we faced our first crisis in the Race Riots in 1958. It took quite a few days before these organisations raised their voices against violent

racist attacks in the black communities.

Much has changed since those days. We have witnessed, among other developments, the fragmentation of a wide spectrum of political opinion represented by those who claim to be inheritors of the traditions in Marxism, liberalism and radicalism.

The riots and insurrections of the summer and Lord Scarman's subsequent enquiry provided a severe test of the political mettle of the left and of liberals.

Prior to the riots and insurrections, there existed a growing body of opinion, fuelled by repeated scandals involving the corruption of high ranking police officers, deaths and examples of unlicensed physical brutality against prisoners in custody, which was convinced of the need for some measure of reform. Proposals for reform hinged on two areas: that there should be an independent element within the structure for handling complaints against the police, and secondly, that there ought to be more local and community control over the police.

Such proposals for reform was limited, in that they failed to grasp the depth of the hatred for the police. Even so, those who proposed them were incapable of pressing their demands on a Parliament not renowned for its reforming zeal.

In addition, the issue concerned not toilet facilities for the handicapped or the culling of seals, but the most sacred of cows, the police, who regard the mildest of criticism as disloyalty to crown and country.

Both the left and liberals share both these limited demands. And, of course, there is the third strand which complicates the problem with the struggle for jobs, housing and so on which the defeat of the Thatcher government and a victory for the Labour Party in some quarters and the revolution in others, would put right.

The Socialist Workers Party belongs to the third strand. Their journal, 'Socialist Worker' (18.7.81) summed up its position in the headline 'Work or Riot'. The riots were condemned and by implication the rioters whose activities, claimed the SWP, provided an excuse for state repression.

Consequently, the left and the liberals, black and white, will not be in a position to intervene in any decisive manner in our struggles against the police. It will be left to the black community which, in the first instance, have been the principal victims, to take up the political aspect of the massive anti police struggles and to win allies among sections of the white communities.

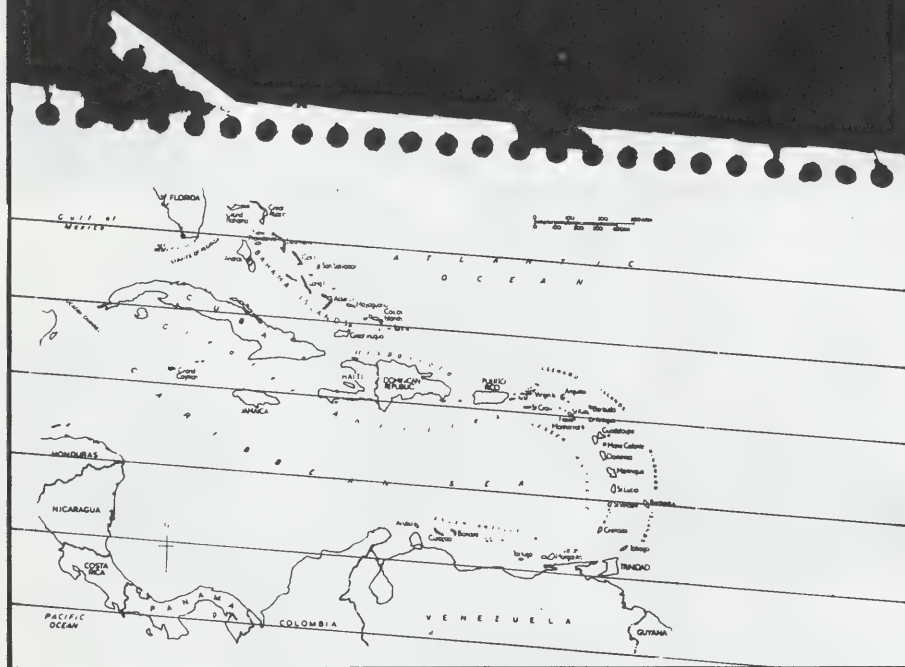
Time and again the issues were made clear by the participants. Raschid Mufti, a spokesman for the Liverpool 8 Defence Committee, after a meeting with Heseltine, the inner city Minister, said that Heseltine wanted to talk about housing. . . "we [the Defence Committee] told him time and again it is the police."

The insistence on tackling the police question is not new. Professor Simey, a Liverpool councillor and chairperson of Merseyside County Council Police Committee, is quoted as saying: "Eight years ago when I stood for Granby ward, which included Toxteth, the only issue then was what I was going to do about the police."

Yes, the struggle will be led by ourselves and we must aim to win a massive reduction in the powers which Parliament and administrative manipulation have conceded to the police in the last 30 years.

Eric Huntley is a member of the publishing firm, Bogle L'Ouverture Publications.

CARIBBEAN DIARY



Dark Days Ahead

by Gerry Kangalee
Our Caribbean Correspondent

We, here in the Caribbean, enter 1982 in the midst of convulsion and threatened convulsion.

The western, capitalist, economic crisis is taking a heavy toll on the fragile, dependent economies of the islands. This, coupled with the effect of natural disasters, political banditry, extensive interference by external forces and the intensification of the class struggle, has set the stage for an explosive 1982.

The capitalist crisis has had markedly dread effects on the economies of Jamaica, Guyana, Barbados, Grenada and the other islands of the Eastern Caribbean. Trinidad and Tobago continues to drift on a cloud of petrodollar illusion and seems headed for the hardest fall of them all.

Seaga's Jamaica has decided to play the game of advance scout for Reagan's naked offensive in the region. American disinformation fills the media and even Swallow, a local calypsonian, has fallen prey to the strident propaganda. He extols the virtues of American imperialism on his latest record album in contradiction to the tradition of revolutionary in local calypso.

Barbados' supposedly 'well-managed'

economy has fallen apart in the face of one disastrous sugarcane crop. As a consequence, 22,000 government workers face retrenchment. Guyana has become a wasteland for working people and a paradise for the bureaucrat state capitalists led by the infamous Forbes Burnham.

Grenada, in the face of American hostility, seems to have eschewed the lesson of self-reliance, so brilliantly practiced by Zimbabwe's Mugabe, and has sought the 'protection' of the Soviet super-power, fraught as that 'protection' is with political manipulation, domination and economic subservience. This has been the history of the Caribbean; from one imperialist overlord to the next.

The tragedy of Dominica continues to unfold. Klu Klux Klan and gangster-supported coup attempt after coup attempt has wracked the poverty-stricken island, following on the heels of the disastrous effects of Hurricane David.

Thatcher's right-wing soulmate, Prime Minister Eugenia Charles, has seized the opportunity to violate the rights of the people. She now governs the island through a state of emergency. Her

government has arrested and detained, without trial, many of its progressive opponents, including Rawlins Jemmot, President General of the newly formed National Workers' Union.

I appeal to the comrades in Britain to do all in their power to assist in securing the release of Rawlins Jemmot. This is a concrete way of implementing the much needed practice of mutual support and solidarity between West Indians in Britain and ourselves at home.

Trinidad and Tobago has been able to escape the more glaring effects of the economic crisis. The government has, at its disposal, a flood of petro-dollars which cascaded into the economy from 1973.

This has had the effect of deepening the class antagonisms in the society. The institutionalisation of massive rip-offs and corruption, the destruction of agriculture, a welfare system disguised as job-creation projects, the abandonment of economic planning, the failure of public utilities to keep pace, the investment of billions of dollars in the Point Lisas industrialisation project which is bound to fail, unbelievable housing shortages and the withering away of the health services are some of the consequences of this unprecedented wind fall.

The Americanisation of Trinidad and Tobago has reached an incredibly new high, and the professional middle class has drawn into its bosom all the American pornographic trash.

But dark days are ahead. Government economists are predicting imminent balance of payment difficulties. The oil market, upon which Trinidad and Tobago depends for 85% of its foreign exchange, has softened considerably. And in the face of American energy policy (stockpiling, return to coal, home insulation, cutbacks on off-shore refining, the development of the Louisiana Off-shore Oil Project, increased domestic exploration). Trinidad and Tobago's oil industry is headed down the road of retrenchment, cutbacks and revenue shortfalls.

The development of the state as the major economic institution in the country has led to a fierce struggle between the French Creole comprador bourgeoisie, who control the local conglomerates, and the bureaucrat capitalists who control the state.

In the recent elections, a national cockfight, (as George Lamming calls it) the French Creole comprador capitalists financed and sponsored a local black lawyer, Karl Hudson-Phillips, as they did with his father Henry Hudson-Phillips in 1956 to intervene directly in the struggle for political power. But on this occasion Hudson-Phillips' political party the Organisation for National

Reconstruction, took on a distinctly fascist character. It was able to activate significant sections of the middle class (particularly its professional strata) and revealed the potential of fascism to develop a mass base in Trinidad and Tobago.

The working people have shown a disposition toward sustained and militant action, as is evidenced by the three year old continuing strike by garment workers in the north eastern town of Arima, the exemplary six month strike which occurred at W.R. Grace's fertilizer plant, a multinational company in the southern industrial belt, the democratisation movement in the unions of teachers and public servants, which led to the formation of the Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers Association and its two year battle for recognition. It led also to the expulsion of Union Czar and government stooge, James Manswell, from the Public Service Association and the establishment of

democratic practices in that union.

The working people are fighting back, but their fight back is hampered by a lack of a national leadership with the ability to chart its course, develop tactics, co-ordinate the struggles of the working people and raise these struggles to the level of the seizure of political power.

An organisation, seeking to fill this vacuum, the Committee for Labour Solidarity (Preparatory), and popularly known as CLS, has been formed. It is made up of trade union and community activists, advanced workers and farmers and progressive intellectuals. The CLS is not a Marxist-Leninist political party, but sees itself as preparing the conditions for such a party to be formed.

Hovering over and intensifying all the developments that have taken place has been the sharpening of the rivalry between the super-powers. This rivalry,

between the United States and the Soviet Union, has aggravated the historical disunity within the region, and promises to turn the Caribbean Basin into a bloody battleground in the inevitable inter-imperialist clash of arms that may be closer than we care to think.

1982 promises to be a year of hard struggle in the Caribbean. Conditions are developing which may lead to people's revolution or fascist repression.

It depends now on which organisations representing what class interests are capable of articulating the demands and reflecting the character of the new mass movements which are forced into being by the deteriorating economic situation. The objective conditions are developing apace, the subjective will be of decisive importance.

Gerry Kangalee is the Education Officer of the Oilfield Workers Trade Union in Trinidad and Tobago.

First International Book Fair Of Radical Black And Third World Books

STATEMENT FROM THE ORGANISERS

The organisation of this First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books is intended to mark the new expanding phase in the growth of radical ideas and concepts and their expression in literature, politics, music, art and social life. These have burst forth from the failure of the post war settlements to satisfy people's urges and aspirations.

New publishing centres have emerged to express the growth of these ideas, establish their autonomy and to break the hold of the metropolitan publishing centres over them. The organisers of the Book Fair are making every effort to involve these new publishing centres both from the third world and the metropolitan countries.

The International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books will be a meeting of the continents for writers, publishers, distributors, booksellers, artists, musicians, film makers and the people who inspire and consume their creative productions.

The special programme of events organised for the Book Fair week will form both a backcloth and impetus for the Book Fair.

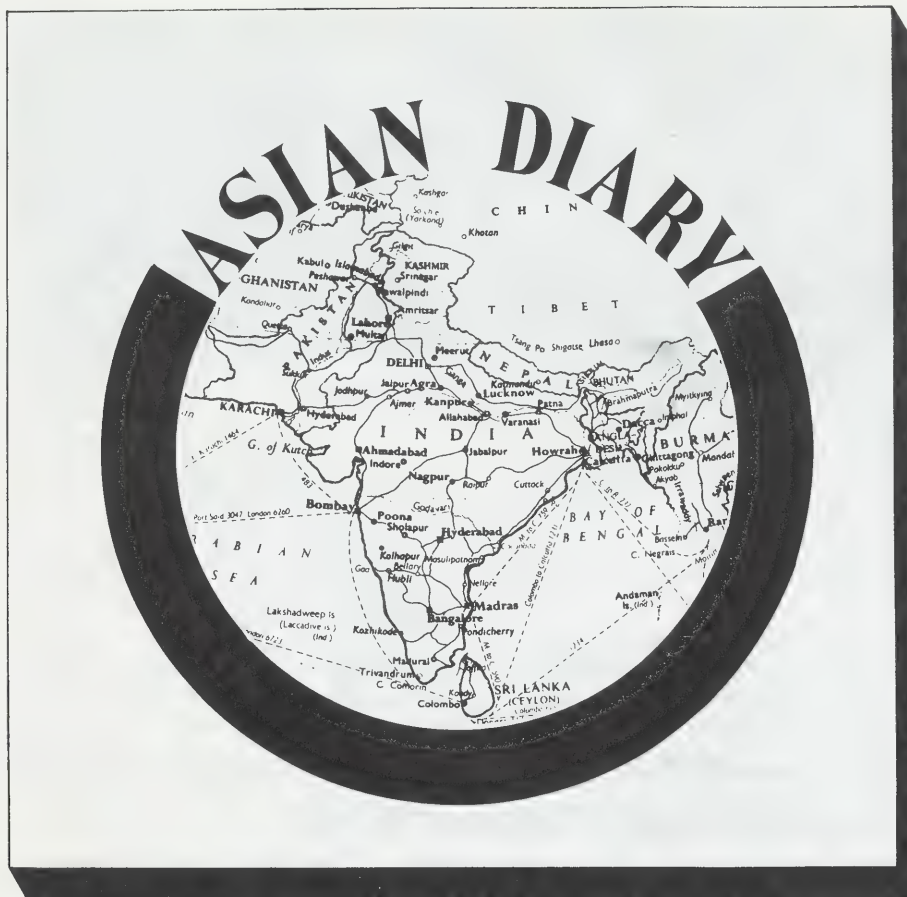
The organisers — Bogle—L'Ouverture Publications, New Beacon Books and Race Today Publications — have been pioneers in radical black book and magazine publishing and in international bookselling over the last 15 years. On the basis of our experience we are confident that the Book Fair will be a significant international event.

Publishers attending the Book Fair include:

African Peoples Socialist Party, Allison and Busby, Allied Publishing, Ahbi Nay, Ajante Books, Africa Centre, Black Ink Collective, Edward Blyden Press, Bogle—L'Ouverture, Black Scholar, Commonplace Workshop, Commission for Racial Equality, Caribbean Journal of Education, Carib Arawak, Centreprise, Da Kapo, Editions Caribbeenes, Stanley Echidime, Eurospan, Fagbamigbe Publications, Greenwood, Grassroots, Heritage Books, Heinemann, Hansib Publications, Headstart, Arnold Heinemann's, International Defence and Aid, Ikenga Publications, Imprint, International African Institute, Longmans, Minority Rights Group, Monthly Review, Nigerian Institute of Social & Economic Research, New Beacon Books, Nok Publishers, Oxford University Press, Oil Field Workers Trade Union, Panaf, Pathfinder, Pluto, Positive Review, Preeti Publications, Publication Distribution Co-operative, Ravan Press, Race Today, Staunch, Sai Publications, Savacou, Shakti, Third World Publications, Third World Foundation, Tanzania Publishing House, Vikas, Women's Press, Yale University Press, Zed Press, Stop Press: Clearing House, Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, Mozambique Angola Guine Information Centre, New Ground, Writers & Readers, SWAM, Allen & Unwin.

For further details contact: Bogle—L'Ouverture Publications 01-579 4920; Race Today Publications 01-737 2268; New Beacon Books 01-272 4889

Details of programme of events, page 27



by our Indian Correspondent
MIKLA SINGH

India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, the territories known in journalese as the Indian sub-continent, have been free of colonial rule for the last thirty five years. In fighting for freedom from the British, Mahatma Gandhi immortalised the sentiment that mis-rule by oneself is better than good government by a colonial power. Alas, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have had nothing but mis-rule by the parties who were the heirs to the nationalist movement or the armies which have arrested their democracies and rule as an elite.

In the period of independence, the sub-continent has witnessed the strengthening, widening and entrenchment of the classes that emerged under twentieth century British colonial rule. Congress rule in India, virtually under a Nehru dynasty (with a short break during which Lal Bahadur Shastri was Prime Minister, and another when the populace threw Indira out after the declaration of her emergency ordinance) is government for the benefit of the landlord and capitalist classes. It has also seen the total impoverishment of the landless agricultural labour, the small peasantry and the tribal populations, numbering millions, whose land if not lives have been annexed by the expansion of capitalist enterprise and

the introduction and progress of capitalist farming.

Pakistan, after a brief period of 'democratic' rule by a civilian government, has suffered almost continuous government by the army, by dictators Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan and now Zia Ul Haq. The one exercise of ballot box democracy, which dictator Yahya Khan initiated in the mid-seventies, resulted in the East Pakistani Party, under Mujib-Ur-Rahman, gaining a majority and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's party standing second. The election would have left East Pakistan, previously a colony of West Pakistan now in charge of the whole country. Neither Bhutto nor Yahya were having any of it. They sent their army into Pakistani Bengal and the East seceded, fought a successful war with the help of India and declared their independence as Bangladesh. Soon after, Bhutto was removed in a coup by Zia, tried for murder and hanged.

The secessionist government of Mujib was itself overthrown by an army coup. Three coups, several assassinations and one election later, Bangladesh is still, in the words of Henry Kissinger, 'a basket case'.

The nationalist revolutions of the sub-continent have not had the mass support to transform themselves into economic ones. Several communist parties have entered the field as leaders of mass discontent and projected architects of a new India. They have constantly gener-

ated programmes of economic development and strategies of government as alternatives to Congress or military rule.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist), the CPIM, holds state government power in Bengal and Tripura and has had a chequered history of coalition rule and wheeling and dealing with other parties to form governments and state government oppositions. It has gathered a battery of intellectuals about it who have prescriptions for India's every ill. What it has not got is a mass revolutionary movement in the form of providing workers and peasants with an expressive voice and the infrastructure of organisation to take power. Voice and power are reserved for the party hierarchy.

Nevertheless, the sub-continent, since Independence, has seen mass political movements. There was the railway strike of millions of workers in the mid-seventies in India, the Gujarat student movement, the Jayaprakash Narayan movement and the secessionist agitations of several states which forced Indira Gandhi's hand and brought in the emergency. In Pakistan, the Pakhtoon and Baluchi movements declare that they want independence from Islamabad. Bangladesh has its independence and is going nowhere with it.

Throughout the independence period, only the nationalist ideal and the strong arm of the military, in India as well as in Pakistan, have given some sort of unity to the confusion of religions, cultures, castes, ideologies and class divisions that divide the ten million people of the sub-continent. The mark of six preceding centuries, the shadow of their poverty and social structure and injustice still lie over the sub-continent even though electrification, communications and the unification brought about by the productive processes have put the population of these countries in touch with the twentieth century.

Yet, there are unifying factors which point to power and its seizure. They are the aspirations evident in the struggles of peasants to keep the crop they have sown and harvested, the fight of badly led unions for a decent living wage, the urban insurrectionary movements which demand the resignation of corrupt politicians and the lowering of the price of grain, the movement of the slum dwellers of the large cities for self respect and minimum living standards.

Collective aspiration is the backbone of ideology, and this column dedicates itself to give a voice to the aspirations of these sections of the mass.

Mikla Singh is an Indian journalist resident in Bombay.



Destination Biafra by Buchi Emecheta
Published by Allison and Busby
Price £7.95
Reviewed by Leila Hassan

Woman at War

This novel recalls the Biafran war and the pre and post independence politics that led up to it. As in Buchi Emecheta's previous novels, the heroine and central character is a woman. The book is in two distinct parts: the first deals with the tribal/party political struggles which led up to and immediately preceded independence; the second is an account of the way the war itself was fought and how it affected the innocent.

The heroine, Debbie Ogendembe, is the Oxford educated daughter of a corrupt politician who becomes Minister of Finance in 'independent' Nigeria's first government. She is a member of the Itskeri tribe, not one of the three main tribes (Hausa, Ibo or Yoruba) which dominate/divide Nigeria. She returns to newly independent Nigeria determined to play her part in building the black nation, which, she hopes, will be free from tribal divisions. She is equally determined not to be the traditional, Nigerian wife and mother.

Although she has qualms about the blatant corruption of her father and his associates, she is able to slip easily into the role of society girl amongst Nigeria's elite. She maintains a sexual relationship with a senior English army officer, Alan Grey. He is the son of a former governor of Nigeria.

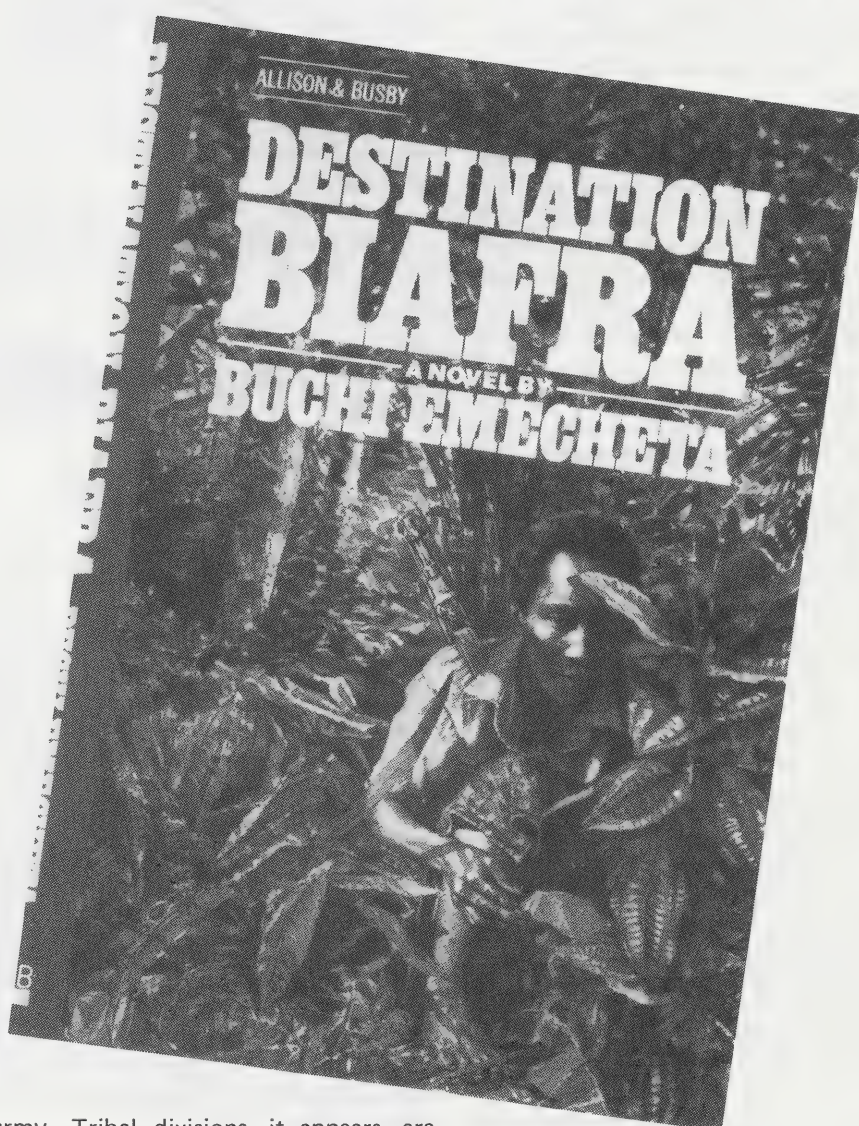
'New' Nigeria is on shaky ground. The constitutional arrangement, worked out by the British, shows signs of instability from the off. After the mass euphoria of independence, the government begins to lose the confidence of its population. It is in this context that old tribal divisions come to the fore.

Debbie Ogendembe is attracted to the military, to those contemporaries of hers who were trained at Sandhurst and are responsible for Nigeria's large

army. Tribal divisions, it appears, are alien to the military. The overriding loyalty is to fellow officers and men. These soldiers are contemptuous of Nigeria's politicians and appear to want a trouble free, 'civilised' country without petty corruption and greed. Against her family's wishes, and against all tradition, she becomes the first female recruit in the Nigerian army. She accepts her father's murder in the first military

coup as part of the cleansing process necessary for Nigeria.

After the second military coup, in which she takes an active part, tribal divisions dominate and determine everything. She perceives her role in these circumstances as a healing and uniting one. When the East finally secedes, she believes the emergence of the state of Biafra heralds the 'new' Nigeria, but she



wishes to avert the bloodbath that this premature declaration will bring to the oil rich region and its people, the Ibos. She willingly acts as a mediator between two men, who were previously brother officers, Saka Momoh from the North, now ruler of Nigeria, and Chijioke Abosi, Eastern leader of the newly declared state of Biafra. She takes a message from Momoh to Abosi aimed at preventing a war.

The nature of her mission does not allow her to reveal her true identity. On one occasion, when she tries to assert her position as an army officer, she is raped by several of her fellow soldiers. She journeys from West to East with refugee women who are fleeing in order to save their own and their children's lives. She witnesses the atrocities of war and the courage and humanity of those Ibos who are up against it. Pillage, mass murder, mass rape, child killing, unborn child killing, castration, mutilation, starvation. It seems to have no limit or end. Debbie is the vehicle through which this devastation is skillfully portrayed.

In her travels, Debbie draws strength from the common folk, particularly those women who refuse to accept defeat. She is surprised by her own mother's capacities, a woman, whom she had considered as mindless and luxury seeking, content to be the appendage of her fat and corrupt husband. Now, her mother accepts her fall in status, the death of her husband, with a matter of factness. She refuses to let the rape of her daughter, the killing all around her set her back. Rather, it strengthens her resolve that she and her daughter must live.

When one young woman laments on what will happen to her without her man, she is sharply reminded, by an older woman, of the reality of her life when he was alive. And anyway, aren't they all reduced to this position because of the actions of power hungry, arrogant, ambitious, self-willed men? This point is brought home to Debbie in so many ways: Saka Momoh's refusal to give the order to his generals that the wanton massacre of Ibo civilians should stop; Alan Grey's double-dealing role throughout, highlighted by arranging arms to Nigeria and Red Cross aid to Biafra; Chijioke Abosi's refusal to stop the war even when it is patently clear that he can't win.

She fails in her role as mediator. Abosi ridicules her as a woman involved in matters of men. She agrees to his request that she goes to the West in order to highlight Biafra's cause and Britain's complicity in it.

Debbie, herself, is now transformed by the whole experience. She is no longer prepared to be the willing tool of men.

She decides to make and to take her own decisions. She thwarts Abosi's plan to get arms instead of medicine and food transported in the relief planes. Her boyfriend attempts to persuade her that the suffering will stop, the war will end, if Abosi is eliminated. He gives her the weapons to kill the leader. She makes the attempt and fails, but only when she discovers Abosi deserting Biafra just as the Nigerian army is making its final push.

Alan Grey, his mission accomplished, asks her to leave the mess of Nigeria. He offers her marriage and she refuses. She is now determined to reconstruct Nigeria. She wants to be part of the process that will make Africa not 'stoop to being the wife' of Britain.

Emecheta has attempted to bring a historical and political perspective to this bloody episode in Nigeria's history. She aimed to write a book from which Nigerians would learn, from the experience of war, to overcome tribal division, bitterness and hatred. She has succeeded. It is a moving story, simply told.

Sophisticates

Tar Baby by Toni Morrison
Published by Chatto & Windus
Price £6.95
Reviewed by Angela Watson

'Tar Baby', the latest novel by Toni Morrison, author of 'Song of Solomon', 'Sula' and 'Bluest Eye' represents a new departure in the area of theme and style. It is advisable to reserve any judgement of the book until the end of chapter three, from which point one begins to appreciate the fragmentary quality that has preceded.

Valerian Street, an eccentric white American, buys an island in the Caribbean 'for almost nothing'. He has an 'impressive' house built there, 'L'arbe de la Croix', for his retirement. Sidney and Ondine are his devoted black American servants, indebted to him for years of employment and the education of their niece, Jadine Childs.

The discovery of Son, 'a black man with dreadlock hair', is the turning point of the story. His entrance is met with screams and prayers. Son is a pivotal character, exposing the pride and shame of others.

The climax of the novel is intensely knit in actions, thoughts and words. Bitterness and guilt, hitherto disguised, are relentlessly brought to the fore. At

Christmas, for example, servant and master sit down to dinner at the same table and inequalities become magnified:

"I may be a cook, Mr Street, but I'm a person too."

"Mr Street," said Sidney, "my wife is as important to me as yours is to you and should have the same respect."

"More," said Ondine. "I should have more respect. I am the one who cleans up her shit!"

Immediately before this, Valerian Street has sacked two helpers, Therese and Gideon, natives of the island for stealing 'his' apples; a menial crime when compared with his exploitation of natives:

'... the people whose sugar and cocoa had allowed him to grow old in regal comfort. . .'

Valerian Street is a social type, cleverly constructed by the author, through whom negative areas of the black American experience are conveyed.

Toni Morrison's humour cannot escape our notice. This is achieved by attaching peculiar habits, pre-occupations and addictions to her characters.

The powerful attraction between Jadine and Son is predictable, and develops into a battling romance, made more violent by their opposing philosophies on life. Relationships, glamour and competition in Europe and New York have moulded Jadine into a determined, passionate but fearful black female. Her return to the island was for totally selfish reasons, a temporary escape. She feels no real commitment to her aunt and uncle, and abandons them when their livelihood is threatened.

Son, unlike Jadine, is loathe to survive on the raciness of New York. 'New York oiled her joints. . . This is home. . . If ever there was a black woman's town, New York was it.' To Son, it was a sad city. Their visit to Son's hometown, Eloë, Florida pinpoints the central theme of 'Tar Baby'. In a few pages, we realise that these people, like Son, know 'their true and ancient properties.' This is why Jadine's attempts to convince him that life in New York has more to offer in terms of 'making it' fails. Toni Morrison proves here that dignity can only be the property of people who know and are proud of their roots. The break up of their love affair is as inevitable as the beginning.

Unfortunately, the book ends with Son desperately searching for Jadine. If this was intended to inject more drama into the story, it seems unnecessary. What it does suggest is that their love for each other was ultimately the strongest force, and Son's return to their first shared love nest, the island, is therefore natural.

International Book Fair Radical Black 3rd World

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at the
Islington Town Hall Upper Street
Islington London N1 2UD

on
April 1 – 3 1982

Thursday April 1 11.00am – 5.30pm
Friday April 2 11.00am – 5.30pm
Saturday April 3 10.30am – 4.30pm

Entry 25p
Children 16 years and school students 10p

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Evening Sessions
Sunday, March 28th
7.45pm
Venue to be fixed
Entry 50p

FORUM ON BLACK FILMS IN BRITAIN

Presenters include:
Horace Ove Director
Jim Pines Film Maker and Writer

Monday, March 29th
7.45pm
Conway Hall
Red Lion Square, WC1
Entry 50p

FORUM ON BLACK THEATRE IN BRITAIN

Presenters include:
Pearl Connor Actress and Producer
Yvonne Brewster Actress and Director
Norman Beaton Actor

Tuesday, March 30th
7.45pm
Camden Town Hall
Euston Road, NW1
Entry £2.50

INTERNATIONAL POETRY READING

Those taking part include:
Abdilatif Abdalla (Tanzania)
John Agard (Guyana)
James Berry (Jamaica)
Valerie Bloom (Jamaica)
Eddie Brathwaite (Barbados)
Imruh Ceasar (St. Kitts)
Accabre Huntley (Black Britain/Guyana)
Mahmood Jamal (India)
Linton Kwesi Johnson (Jamaica)
Archie Markham (Montserrat)
Jack Mapanje (Malawi)
Oku Onuora (Jamaica)
Archie Pool (Guyana)
Cecil Rajendra (Malaysia)
Pedro Perez Sarduy (Cuba)
Mushtaq Singh (Pakistan)
Michael Smith (Jamaica)

Wednesday, March 31st
7.45pm
Conway Hall
Red Lion Square, WC1
Entry 50p

FORUM ON WRITERS AND CRITICS

Presenters include:
Biodun Jeyifo Nigerian writer and critic
Kole Omotoso Nigerian writer and critic
Rhonda Cobham Trinidadian critic

Thursday, April 1st
7.00pm
Islington Town Hall
Upper Street, N1
Entry 50p

FORUM ON BLACK PUBLISHING

Presented by:
Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications
Race Today Publications
New Beacon Books

Friday, April 2nd
7.45pm
Conway Hall
Red Lion Square
WC1. Entry 50p

FORUM ON RACIST AND FASCIST ATTACKS ON
BLACK, LEFT WING AND COMMUNITY
BOOKSELLERS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS IN
BRITAIN
Presented by: Jessica Huntley

Saturday, April 3rd
7.45pm
Conway Hall
Red Lion Square, WC1
Entry £2.50

CLASSICAL AND FOLK CONCERT

Maxine Franklin Piano
Keith Waithe Flute

Sunday, April 4th
7.30pm
Camden Town Hall
Euston Road, N1
Entry £4.00

VARIETY CONCERT

Artists appearing include:
Denis Bovell Band
Rico (backed by the Specials)
Mangrove Steel Orchestra
Michael Smith (of 'Me Can't Believe It' fame)
Valerie Bloom (Poet)
Ekome Dance Group
Ankoor Arts (Asian dance group)
Peoples War Sound System
Linton Kwesi Johnson (Compere)

Day Sessions
Thursday, April 1st
11.00am – 12.30pm &
2.00pm – 3.30pm

Session for school students with young black writers
from various workshops. Co-ordinator: Anne Johnson

Friday, April 2nd
11.00am – 12.30pm &
2.00pm – 3.30pm
Entry 20p

Sessions for school students with adult writers, critics
and publishers visiting the Fair.

Saturday, April 3rd
12.00pm – 4.00pm
Islington Town Hall
Upper Street, N1

INTERNATIONAL FOOD FAIR

Tickets will be available at the door or in advance from: Walter Rodney Bookshop,
5a Chignell Place, Ealing, W13. 01-579 4920
New Beacon Books, 76 Stroud Green Road, Finsbury Park, N4. 01-272 4889
Race Today Publications, 165 Railton Road, Brixton, SE24. 01-737 2268
Reduced rates available for people wishing to attend more than one session
Two concerts and poetry reading £8.00 (save £1.00)
Five forums £2.00 (save 50p)
All eight sessions £9.50 (save £2.00)

This is a preliminary programme and although every effort has been made to make details accurate please check closer to the time.

Wat A Situashan

tek a prip
pon di lan
wen a si
'ow it tan
a haffi hallaaa
man!

man
wat a situashan
man
wat a situashan
 wen a trad
 tru di streets
 nuff a meet
 a hussle
 an a bussle
 fran dus'
 til dawn
 a fret
 an a sweat
 fi mek
 ends meet
 a dub a dub
 to a bitta
 bitta beat

man
wat a situashan
man
wat a situashan
 'ours beat
 check di streets
 up tung
 dung
 tung
 all a rung tung
 people a eat
 out a gabage heap
 nuff a sleep
 pon cole konkrete

man
wat a situashan
 one stap
 tek een

dis one
im screw
mi seh
di ole scene
feel it
im staat
fi cuss
waan mek fus'
frustrashan
hol' im
man!

man
wat a situashan
man
wat a situashan
 as fi di yute
 fi dem it kute
 "beg yuh ten cents"
 weh dem fucha
 a wipe win'screen
 a trafalga
 an hope
 nex ting
 yuh kno
 in/definate
 ditenchan

man
wat a situashan
man
wat a situashan
 con
 fushan
 tun lef'
 tun rite
 risin
 prices
 crises
 industrial dispute
 nuff nuff shat
 still a clap

man
wat a situashan

yuh tink
a jus nashinal
dis yah one
a intanashinal
man
wat a situashan
 fram brixton
 to kingston tung
 mi seh
 di fia
 jus a bun
 but
 wi kno
 'ow dem tan
 ol pirates
 wi kno
 dem plans
 stak pilin
 nuclar weapons
 an nutron bombs
 to hol' nashans
 at ransom
 gun boat
 dip/lo/masi
 check
 di invashon
 of angola

man
wat a situashan
 but
 nuttin can stap
 di course
 a dis force
 nuttin can stap
 swoeto fram burn
 nuttin can stap
 dis force a liberashan
 nutting can stap
 dis kon frontashan

man
wat a situashan
man
wat a situashan

Natty Natty

Say Natty natty

Noh badda dash
whe yuh culture
For de teacher man know it
But im naw tell di sheep
Dat rata rata naw bring
Back new teeth.

When yuh dash wey de spliff
An tek up di sniff
Say natty natty
Noh badda dash
Whe yuh culture

Remember yard is Mumma
Pon ground yuh sleep
Tek yuh pickney

When yuh tiad fi breed
An if yuh naw sleep
Yuh mumma naw sleep
An if yuh a go die
She a goh beg God
Mek she die too
So say natty natty
Nuh badda dash
Whe yuh culture.

Yuh noh country
Come to town
Yuh born a Jam-down
So no figet yuh gal a yard
An tek one from abroad
An lie out pon de beach
An ejaculate between
A time magazine
Dem will spread it
pon a Boo York scene
dat yuh is a dallah-a-day-dread
A betta yuh bald yuh head
Say natty natty
Noh badda dash
Whe yuh culture.

Say natty natty
Noh badda dash
Whe yuh culture.

A know yuh disillusion
When yuh see de politician
Tek out yuh dawta
An buy her suppa
Den get her fat
An call it culture
But say natty natty
Be aware of de culture smuggler
Noh badda tek wi revolution
So tun touris attraction

Man.

©Michael Smith

Smith - Onuora Tour

During the months of April and May 1982
Michael Smith and Oku Onuora will be
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community organisations.

Further details from the organisers: Race
Today, 165 Railton Road, London SE24
OLU. Telephone 01-737 2268.

Di Great Insohreckshan

© Linton Kwesi Johnson

it woz in April nineteen eighty-wan
doun inna di ghetto af Brixtan
dat di babylan dem cause such a frickshan
an it bring about a great insohreckshan
an it spread all ovah di naeshan
it woz a truly historical okayjan

it woz event af di year
an I wish I ad been dere
wen wi run riot all ovah Brixtan
wen wi mash-up plenty police van
wen wi mash-up di wicked wan plan
wen wi mash-up di Swamp Eighty-wan
fi wha?
fi mek di rulah dem andahstan
dat wi naw tek noh more a dem oppreshan

an wen mi check out
di ghetto grapevine
fi fine out all I coulda fine
evry rebel jussa revel in dem story
dem a taak about bout di powah an di glory
dem a taak bout di burnin an di lootin
dem a taak bout di mashin an di grabin
dem a tell mi bout di vanquish an di victri

dem seh: di babylan dem went too far
soh wha?
wi ad woz fi bun two kyar
an wan an two innocent get mar

but wha?
noh soh it goh sometime inna war
een star
noh soh it goh sometime inna war?

dem seh: wi bun dung di George
wi coulda bun di lanlaad
wi bun dung di George
wi nevah bun di lanlaad
wen wi run riot all ovah Brixtan
wen wi mash-up plenty police van
wen wi mash-up di wicked wan plan
wen wi mash-up di Swamp Eighty-wan

dem seh: wi comandeer kyar
an wi ghaddah aminishan
wi buil wi barricade
an di wicked ketch afraid
wi sen out wi scout
fi goh fine dem whereabouts
den wi faam-up wi passi
an wi mek wi raid

now dem run gaan
goh plan countah-hackshan
but di plastic bullit
an di waatah canon
will bring a blam-blam
will bring a blam-blam
nevah mine Scarman
will bring a blam-blam

Insistent Passions

Genetha

by Roy A K Heath Published by
Allison & Busby price £2.95
Reviewed by Leslee Wills

'Genetha', the last of Roy Heath's trilogy, set in Georgetown, Guyana, is really the final part of what was originally one large volume.

It was written before 'A Man Come Home' (1974) and 'The Murderer' (1978, Guardian Fiction Prize). This huge, first novel became 'From the Heat of the Day' of the unhappy Armstrong marriage, 'One Generation' of their son Rohan's fate, and finally the novel about his sister Genetha.

Roy Heath takes up Genetha's own story after the death of her father, Armstrong and the departure of her brother, Rohan, for Essequibo, a long way away from Georgetown.

The first part of the book concentrates on her relationship with her lover, 'Fingers', once her brother's best friend. She rejects a more 'respectable' and long-standing suitor, Michael, for the feckless

'Fingers', an expert billiards player. He moves in to live with her and she is tumultuously happy. He soon takes advantage of her confused frame of mind and makes her sign the family house over to him.

From this point, the book becomes a catalogue of a disastrous change of fortunes. Manless and homeless, Genetha is forced to accept help from the ex-family maid, Esther, now turned prostitute. Genetha fights against the slide into poverty and prostitution when she tries to live with her 'respectable' Queenstown relatives for a while. In the end, her association with Esther and reputation in general force them to spurn her. The novel ends with Genetha hopelessly trapped in the brothel life she genuinely despises.

Genetha has acquired and continues to develop her mother's strongheadedness and need for self-fulfilment. She had three morally acceptable choices: life with her upright, spinstered aunts; a dull marriage to Michael, the avid churchgoer; joining her bother, Rohan,

in Essequibo. When she chooses a socially unacceptable liaison with 'Fingers', the repressive familial bonds, which she escaped when her father died and her brother moved away, re-emerge in the form of his own family to choke and rob her.

Heath is a very able story-teller. He skilfully draws Genetha's obsessiveness with girlhood past and family, her inability to relate to others, the stubborn pride inherited from her mother's side and her fierce independence of spirit. In adversity, even, we are told that Genetha "found a peculiar satisfaction in this lonely existence for her soul was her own at least".

Throughout, he underscores a theme of womenfolk dispossessed, sacrificed or simply wronged. Also, he points out the narrow repressiveness that locks both father and daughter in the brothel syndrome and causes both Rohan and Genetha to pay for their insistent passions.

Thus Heath exposes the compromised relationships in the small Georgetown society with its fragile and often tragic social barriers.

It is a well written and disturbing finale.

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Derek Nicholls, Director, Midlands Arts Centre, Cannon Hill Park, B'ham B12 9QH. On receipt of S.A.E.

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For queries contact Bill Swainson 734-1498

RACE TODAY PUBLICATIONS



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New Perspectives on the Asian Struggle in Britain by Farrukh Dhondy
Historical analysis of Asian strikes between 1959 — 1979 together with interviews with the Asian participants in that strike movement.

Black Explosion in British Schools by Farrukh Dhondy, Barbara Beese and Leila Hassan

Three members of the Race Today Collective identify the revolt of black students and parents as one of the major agencies for radical change in the schooling system.

Voices of the Living and the Dead by Linton Kwesi Johnson
Some of Linton's earlier writings. First published in 1974 by Race Today and long out of print.

From Bobby to Babylon: Blacks and the British Police by Darcus Howe

An analysis of 25 years of struggles waged by the West Indian community against the excessive use of police power against them.

80th Birthday Lectures by C L R James

James celebrated his 80th birthday in three public lectures organised by the Race Today Collective.

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Financial support for students on the preparatory course is at the discretion of Local Education Authorities. Residents in the Inner London Education Authority's area will usually be given financial support, if they meet the normal eligibility requirements. Applications from other areas will be given appropriate advice.

Applications must normally have been born on or before 31st August 1959.

Further details of the course are available from the Department of Academic Studies (PAJ), SELTEC, Breakspears Road, Lewisham Way, London SE4.

Race Today has moved

Our new address is

165 Railton Road

Herne Hill, London SE24 OLU.

THE EASTWARDS TRUST

Group home for elderly Asian men in East London offers new post for detached worker to manage the project and develop community links. Salary £5000 p.a. Some help with accommodation possible. Knowledge of Asian language essential. For further details write to Eastwards Trust, 46 Bruce Road, London E3 3HL.

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Contact Suzanne Scafe, Brixton Community Law Centre, 506 Brixton Road, London SW9. Telephone 01-733 4245. Closing date 28th February 1982.

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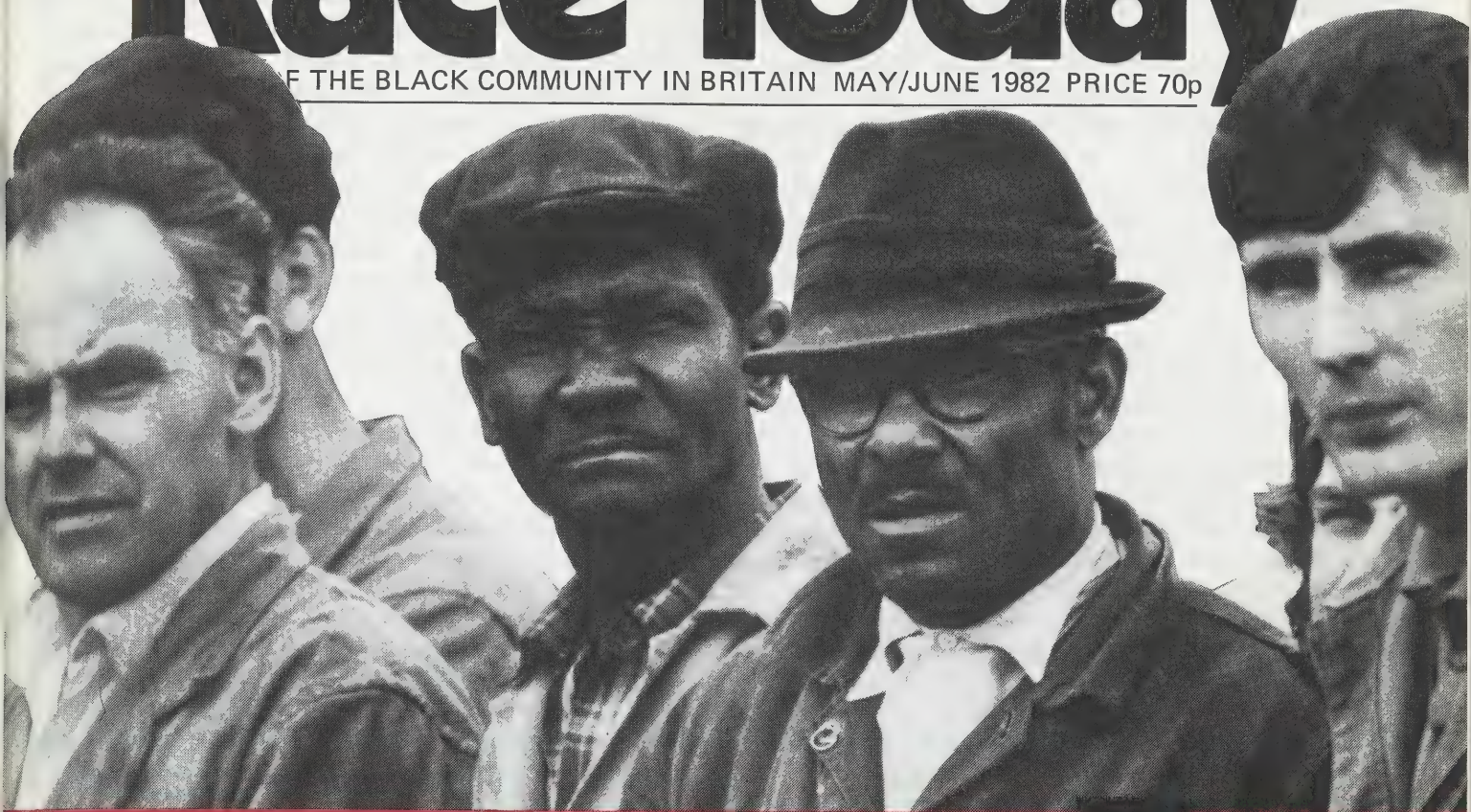
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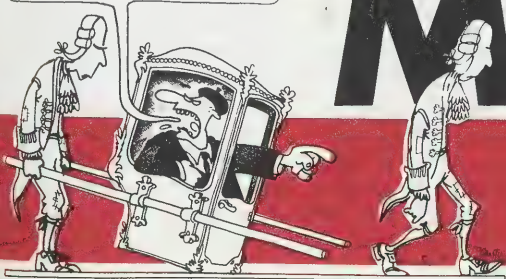


Black workers at

Fords

Migrants under Mitterrand

DEHORS LES MÉTÈQUES!



EDITORIAL

Harbingers of violence

In one week, during the month of April, two very important court cases have made the news headlines in the United Kingdom. They both demonstrated police violence and intimidation against black victims and the obdurate refusal of established authority to take an uncompromising stand against the perpetrators.

Until August 1977, George Lindo worked in a textile factory in Bradford. Up to that time, nothing outside the normal routine of working class life had happened to him. Then, three police officers, attached to West Yorkshire Police, changed all that. They arrested George Lindo, planted him with a money-bag, a knife and other bits and pieces, bullied him into signing a statement and proceeded, with the assistance of the judicial authorities, to secure a conviction against him for armed robbery.

George Lindo spent one year and twenty days in prison as a result. Fortunately for him, the character of the West Indian community had been altered fundamentally. 20 years ago, George would have served his sentence and nothing more would have been heard about it. The black community is littered with hundreds of like victims. Not so today. An Action Committee was formed, it campaigned vigorously for his release and George was set free. The Home Office was forced to accept public default and George received an ex gratia payment of £24,275 as compensation. One officer in the case was forced to resign. The other two are pursuing their careers quite comfortably as members of the West Yorkshire police.

Then there followed the case of Mr and Mrs White. Several police officers charged into the home of this aged West Indian couple and savaged them brutally before arresting them and charging them with assault. They won the case and later sued the Metropolitan police for damages. They were awarded £51,000. Justice Mars-Jones, in his judgement, described the police officers involved as "liars". He denounced them as "brutal", as having "perpetrated a catalogue of violence and inhuman treatment" against the West Indian couple, both in their 60's. He accused the officers of organising, "an orchestrated attempt to mislead the court in order to cover up illegality and unjustified use of force". And he concluded about these limbs of the law that, "they assaulted this defenceless man in his own home with a weapon and beat him up in a brutal inhuman way with the object of inflicting pain and injury on him".

Not one word in Mars-Jones' statement is new to the black community. For 25 years we have attempted to demystify the British police to the public at large, to educate the population about their policemen and to push established authority to act against the type of behaviour experienced by George Lindo and Mr and Mrs White. We have succeeded in educating large sections of British society, of punching holes in the "nice bobby" image, but established authority remains unmoved.

To this day Det. Constable Jackson and Det. Sergeant Craven continue their shameful careers in the West Yorkshire police. All the officers, who visited

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Produced by: Race Today Collective

Vol 14 No.3

Letters

Dear Race Today,

Your February-March issue carries a short item in the "Without Malice" column about the New Cross Fire inquest. This item intended to prove that the Lewisham Council for Community Relations did not want justice to be done in the case of a witness of the fire.

This witness — teenager Erroll Williams — made a statement after the fire while being held by the police. And he withdrew it as soon as LCCR met him on his release from Lewisham police station.

"Without Malice" makes the false allegation that LCCR stopped the inquest lawyers who were protecting Mr Williams' interests from seeing a document in our possession which proves he wanted to partially withdraw his statement. 'Race

Today' knowingly published this false allegation.

The truth is that the document was given in the Coroner's Court during the inquest to the lawyers — specifically to Mr Ken Williams a solicitors' clerk — by Asquith Gibbs, LCCR's senior officer, on the instructions of Erroll Williams' mother. The truth is that this precise information was given to Darcus Howe by telephone by myself in the second week of January this year.

LCCR requires no apology from 'Race Today' though it is a pity that this journal should join the gutter press in this matter. It is a pity above all because of Erroll Williams and his family. Moreover, by adding to the confusions around the New Cross fire tragedy, 'Race Today' is obstructing the path of real justice. It is therefore to the fire victims and to the Williams family that 'Race Today' should apologise.

ence and lawlessness

such appalling brutality on the Whites, remain members of the Metropolitan police. Perhaps that kind of behaviour is the hallmark of the good modern police officer. Why else has one of those officers been promoted to sergeant?

These officers are not exceptions to the rule; they are the rule. They represent the overwhelming tendency within the police which has preyed with extraordinary violence and savagery on the black community in Britain. Police officers, and trained officers at that, do not suddenly erupt into an orgy of violence. Oh no. They do not lie, cheat and cover up simply out of the blue. They are dab hands at it; they have practiced it consistently. The difference in these cases is that they have been found out.

Here was an opportunity for those in power to make clear to those officers, who lie low in police stations up and down the country, ready to beat up blacks, ready to cover up, lie and cheat that an era was at an end. In order to make this clear, all the officers involved in both cases ought to have been suspended at once. This is a supreme political issue not a bureaucratic matter to be played around with. Following their immediate suspension, it was the responsibility of the Home Secretary to issue a political statement condemning such behaviour minus ifs or buts. History required him to make clear to the whole community that he was determined to stamp-out such practices. Having done that, blacks throughout this country would have felt, at once, that this burning political issue was on the way to being

resolved.

Instead silence reigns. He has said not a dickybird. We have been treated with the pompous statement issued by Scotland Yard that they have appointed two senior officers to investigate the White case. What is there to investigate? The police have covered up this issue for 5 years. And every fool knows that the most rigorous court of investigation is a civil court acting without a jury.

What will the investigating officers discover that Justice Mars-Jones has not found out? Precious little, we are sure. All talk about investigation by senior officers is simply a ruse to ensnare this odious behaviour within a bottomless, bureaucratic pit. We are sure of this only because they have danced, jigged, bobbed and weaved in this sadistic way for the past 25 years. Perhaps later, in some dark corner, small doses of discipline would be meted out to these harbingers of violence and lawlessness. All in the name of maintaining the image of the police.

Those days are at an end. Blacks in their thousands have already registered their violent opposition to the status quo, and there is no turning back.

Either those in power act now and act decisively or else they subject this society to the most crude and appalling violence.

May 1982

Although LCCR doesn't require an apology, we would suggest that the title of the column be changed from 'Without Malice' to 'Without Aforethought'.

Yours faithfully,
Martin Rabstein

Lewisham Council for Community Relations.

(See Without Malice Page 92)

Dear Race Today,
I was very disappointed to see very few black participants in the national demonstration organised by the Anti Apartheid Movement on Sunday 14 March, 1982.

Indeed it is the black media and journals like your own which must report widely and give proper guidance on such occasions. May I just mention that the black media, black politicians and black community leaders need to work more vigorously and forcefully than

at present so that at events such as the demonstration our presence is visibly felt. What takes place in South Africa concerns us more than it does others.

Yours sincerely,
Anil Pandya
Reading.

Dear Race Today,
We visited the Fair on Thursday 1 April, representing the Inner City Services of Birmingham Public Libraries, and would like to congratulate the organisers on a very impressive event. It was useful to see all the major publishers displaying their publications in an attractive and accessible manner. The opportunity to discuss with representatives the type of material they are producing and our opinions of the needs of people in Birmingham's inner city was valuable. Unfortunately we were

unable to spend enough time at the Fair to do this in any depth, but we made some useful contacts.

Our only criticism is that no provision was made for librarians to purchase materials in bulk from the various publisher's stands under one blanket order. We were reduced to either negotiating complicated arrangements with individual publishers, many of whom clearly had not imagined that librarians would be attending the fair, or making notes of materials we would like to order.

If a similar event is staged, and we hope very much that it will be, please will the organisers consider the special practical needs of librarians who are trying to spend large amounts of money.

Yours faithfully,
Geoff Mills
Maggie Norwood
Kathy McKenna
Inner Ring Zone Libraries

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NEWS BACKGROUND

Thornton Heath

the débacle

The conviction of 11 young blacks on charges arising out of the Thornton Heath affair, in which Terence May was killed, and the harsh sentences meted out to those found guilty constitute a serious set back for the black community and a victory for white racist reaction. Below, Claudette Straker, Pat Dick and Darcus Howe outline the reasons for this serious defeat.

The bald facts of the Thornton Heath affair are these: On Monday 1 June 1981, several young blacks marched from the local Parchmore Youth Club and on to the Wilton Arms public house. There, they carried out a retaliatory mission against known fascists and racists who had been leading the physical and violent assaults on the local black community. In such circumstances it is to be expected that the innocent are likely to be among the casualties. Terence May found himself at the wrong place at the wrong time and lost his life.

The local police had an abysmal record in bringing to justice those who were responsible for attacking blacks, even in cases in which the perpetrators were discovered with weapons. They were not so lax once the tables had turned and whites were now the victims. Led by Inspector Crump, the Croydon police moved into top gear, searching houses and detaining scores of young blacks. With an eye to the prevailing mood of public suspicion about police methods of investigation, Crump & co. cynically provided facilities for the local MP, Councillors, the Community Relations Council and members of the public to inspect conditions under which some

of the suspects and witnesses were detained and interrogated. None of those eventually charged were afforded these privileges. The police also anticipated the major line of defence which the defendants would employ, namely that the Wilton Arms was a base for local fascists and racists. To counter this allegation, they mobilised evidence to the effect that the Wilton Arms was a haven of multiracial peace. And finally, they took care to head off any allegations that their investigations were carried out other than impartially. The state financed Community Relations Council wrote to the local Commander expressing their appreciation for police fair play.

At the end of the investigations, the police had gathered together several statements of admissions and evidence from black witnesses implicating their friends. These, together with the peripheral statements mentioned above, were sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions who in turn issued charges of murder, riot and affray against 15 defendants. Ronnie Pilgrim and Gary Huggins were declared the leaders of the assault force.

The case was eventually tried at the Old Bailey and 11 were found guilty. Pilgrim was sentenced to eight years for manslaughter. (He was the only one convicted of May's killing). Huggins was sent down for five years for riot and the others were imprisoned in descending order of importance for terms ranging from four years to eight months. It was a public carnage of courageous young men who stood firmly against the terrorism of the racist right against their

community. At the end of the day, the presiding judge denounced them as common criminals, praised the police and extolled the virtues of British justice.

How did this happen? This question assumes great importance because the debacle occurred at a time when blacks are far less vulnerable than we ever were.

Thornton Heath, Croydon, is a known fascist area and blacks who live there have been under constant attack. Some reports indicate 250 attacks in the 18 months prior to May's death. The police claim there were less. However, no one has denied that this area, home base for the National Front, is considered one of the worst for racial attacks.

Yet, until the drastic action of June 1st, the West Indian community in Thornton Heath avoided the developing black movement as if it were the plague. They endured this terror with a respectable suburban silence. And a suburban silence it was. These families were the ones who had moved out from the inner city areas of Brixton, Balham and Tooting in South London for a better life in Croydon. They wanted to be out of range of police harassment, run down schooling conditions and the stresses of inner city life. They had made some progress, they thought, and tended to look down on their lesser brethren in the ghettos of South London. They warned their children to stay away from Brixton and such areas lest they be contaminated by lawless elements. Then the racists and fascists struck. Blacks in Croydon, in the main owner occupiers,

had imbibed suburban respectability and responded accordingly. Fascism and racism had either to be avoided or endured with stoicism. An alsatian dog or two would protect the home, children were ordered to keep off the streets and stay indoors and somehow, they thought, the police would soon come to the realisation that they were blacks with a difference and all protection would be forthcoming.

A section of young blacks in Thornton Heath did not drink from the same trough as did their parents. They continued to socialise with their friends in Brixton, Balham and Tooting. They followed the same sound systems, attended the same parties and had the same concerns. They had tasted the successes of the New Cross campaign; some of them were active in the Brixton uprising against the police and they had been moved by the readiness of young Asians in Southall to strike back with violent hostility.

By summer 1981, young blacks finally broke with the tradition of subservience and launched the counter attack. Once the murder of Terence May hit the headlines of the national media, the thin cloak of respectability was challenged. Rather than rally around these courageous young men, the black community went the opposite way. They were desperate to show their disapproval and reaffirm their respectability. They set out to cooperate fully with the police. They opened their doors, provided information and bullied their children to do the same. Inspector Crump later boasted about his successes in this regard. Where in Brixton the police had found it impossible to obtain evidence from local black residents about who did what in the insurrection, in Croydon they sang like canaries.

Yet, there existed a possibility, slim though it was, that the situation could be rescued. The Croydon Black Peoples Action Committee was formed and an invitation was extended to the New Cross Massacre Action Committee to give of their campaigning experience. A meeting between both groups and the parents was arranged to hammer out the details of a co-ordinated legal defence backed by effective mass political mobilisation in support of the defendants.

It was not long before it emerged that the Croydon Black Peoples Action Committee was but a front for the ambitions of its 3 man membership, Femi Adelaja, Winford Jamieson and Tony Graham. They opposed at every turn that the defendants and their parents ought to be central to the campaign; they were hostile to the position that barristers be chosen on merit not on race; they scoffed

at the idea that only after a thorough assessment of the evidence should the lawyers be called in. At meetings of the parents Adelaja, Graham and Jamieson hectorred and abused the parents. Outside of meetings they manipulated defendants and witnesses until the most God almighty chaos reigned. And lastly the reason for Adelaja's manic insistence on employing black barristers for the defendants only came to light when it was discovered that he had personal connections with the black section of the legal profession.

This trio wreaked such havoc that an organisational advance was impossible. They even resorted to malicious rumour that one of the leading activists in the New Cross campaign was a police woman. They had seen her in police uniform, they claimed.

Later, they issued a public statement which betrayed their political position. Listen to this garbage: "For the first time persons with deep rooted involvement in the Croydon black community, being barristers, social workers and of many other relevant professions, who have the proficiency to articulate the black community's grievances have been called together by the black community itself to carry out some of the roles and functions institutions etc. etc."

Apart from the fact that no one called these three together, the idea that the black movement is to be led by social workers (Graham) barristers (Adelaja's brother) and those with the "proficiency to articulate" (Adelaja and Jamieson) is so much reactionary, colonial nonsense. Yet, they managed to convince the majority of the defendants' parents. Respectability ruled and not without a tinge of Croydon nationalism. The New Cross Committee were finally referred to as outsiders. Off they went arm in arm with as many black barristers as they could find to the Old Bailey. There was no attempt at mobilisation, not the slightest hint even. The 15 defendants stood in the dock at the Old Bailey shorn of any political support.

The self activity of the young blacks in the area led to a massive retraction of statements made by witnesses and some defendants. To a man they claimed that they were forced by the police to tell lies in their statements. They were bullied into implicating themselves and their friends. At half time one defendant was released and murder and affray charges dropped against two others.

The whole case now turned on Pilgrim and Huggins. Should these be convicted then the chances were that the defence of the others would crumble like a pack of cards. Rudy Narayan represented Huggins and a Mr Rant QC, with Berry Bryan as his junior,

represented Pilgrim. Bryan manoeuvred Pilgrim into sacking his QC so that he was now in the limelight in charge of Pilgrim's destiny. And what a mess these two made of the case.

Narayan offered self defence as Huggins' only plank. He told the jury that Huggins had a right of self defence. The community was attacked on Friday, Saturday and Sunday and Huggins was in order to counter attack on the Monday. That was the law claimed Narayan to the jury. Then he added the rider that the final guidance on legal matters rested with the judge.

Then came the judge's summing up. He told the jury that Huggins had no such defence in law. The majority black jury was left with no alternative but to convict Huggins. Narayan was revealed as an advocate of rhetoric with little legal substance. Huggins had deserved a better defence.

Pilgrim, on the other hand, was a victim of gross incompetence. He had an alibi, that he was at home when the incident took place and his wife would testify to this fact. Among the case papers given to lawyers before the case was a statement by Pilgrim's wife that Pilgrim was not at home at the time. Bryan obviously did not prepare his case properly. If he did he could not possibly have overlooked such a crucial piece of information. He called Pilgrim's wife to the witness stand and elicited from her that Pilgrim was at home when the incident took place. The prosecution got up, put Mrs Pilgrim's original statement to her and that was that. Pilgrim was the only one to be convicted for May's killing. Bryan and Narayan had pulled the rug from beneath the rest of the defence. Only those who claimed they arrived late for the action or who were merely on the periphery won their cases. The black jurors were given no choice by Narayan and Bryan.

And where are Adelaja, Jamieson and Graham headed? They are busily negotiating a state grant for some youth project they have floated while the 11 defendants languish in prison. Theirs is a tale told by idiots, full of sound and fury signifying nothing.

George Lindo

wins record compensation



George Lindo was framed by the Bradford Police on a robbery charge. Detective Constables Brierley and Jackson, and Detective Sergeant Craven were responsible for arresting, interrogating and later charging George Lindo with the armed robbery of a betting shop in Bradford. This was in August 1977. These officers planted George with a money bag from the local bank, starved him of refreshments for 24 hours, blew cold air into his cell, abused and threatened him in order to extract a confession from George admitting the crime.

Brierley, Jackson and Craven convinced judge and jury of George's guilt and he was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment at the Leeds Crown Court on 2 March, 1978.

The George Lindo Action Committee was formed on the day after George was sentenced. Demonstrations, pickets and massive propaganda placed the issue of George's innocence before the nation. Eventually on 8 March, 1979 the authorities conceded and let George out of prison without bail conditions. He had already spent a year and 20 days in prison.

They were moved so to act because the Yorkshire police had discovered that Detective Brierley had been in-

involved in concocting statements in the Ripper case. He was asked to resign. It was the identical allegation Lindo had made against him. Further to that, Sergeant Craven had taken a statement from a Mr Elliot who confessed to raping a woman. It turned out later that Elliot had not committed the rape at all. A second man had confessed to it and related crimes. The Court of Appeal quashed George's conviction on 8 June, 1979 and in doing so the presiding judge, Justice Lawton, commented that the case was a disturbing one and he implicat-

ed all 3 officers in the frame-up.

The first demand of the George Lindo Action Committee was established; that George be freed unconditionally. The second demand turned on the issue of compensation. George Lindo must be compensated, demanded the Action Committee, for his ordeal. The Action Committee took the position that the issue of compensation ought not to be left exclusively to the Home Office. They set up a Commission of Enquiry comprising workers, black and white, from the Bradford and London areas to inves-



tigate the Lindo experience and to recommend the amount of compensation. This body recommended that George be paid the sum of £113,431.54. George, through his solicitors, adopted the claim.

Almost 5 years after George's arrest, the Home Office offered him the sum of £24,275. George has accepted it under protest. He is unemployed, has accumulated a lot of debt through this experience and has no prospect

of employment in the immediate future. And Jackson and Craven continue to pursue their careers as officers in the West Yorkshire police. The final demand that all three officers be dismissed is yet to be realised.

Newton Rose

goes before the Law Lords

Newton Rose won his appeal against a conviction for murder and a life sentence. The Court of Appeal quashed the conviction on 8 March 1982 on the basis that a material irregularity had occurred at the trial. Judge Clarke, it was, who required the jury to arrive at a verdict "within 15 minutes" otherwise he would dismiss the jury. The jurors promptly obeyed and found Newton guilty.

The Newton Rose Action Committee, while accepting the legal point of material irregularity, continued to pose the fundamental contention that Newton was framed. They are saying that at the time of the murder, he was miles away with three other friends. That police officers wilfully and malic-



iously bullied Newton's friends into changing their story; that they refused to follow certain leads which would have taken them into fascist territory.

Following the quashing of the conviction, the prosecution gave notice of appeal. On Monday, 29 March, permission for leave to appeal to the House of Lords was granted and the appeal proper comes up on 14 June, 1982. The Lords will be asked to order a retrial. All statute and common law have stated that where a material irregularity exists convictions must be quashed. There is no precedent for retrials. Now, the prosecution is asking the unelected Law Lords to make new law over the heads of parliamentarians.



Drawing by Una Howe

New Cross Massacre Action Committee presents

FIRST STEPS

FULL COLOUR (16" X 22")

POSTERS

FULL COLOUR (4" X 6")

POSTCARDS

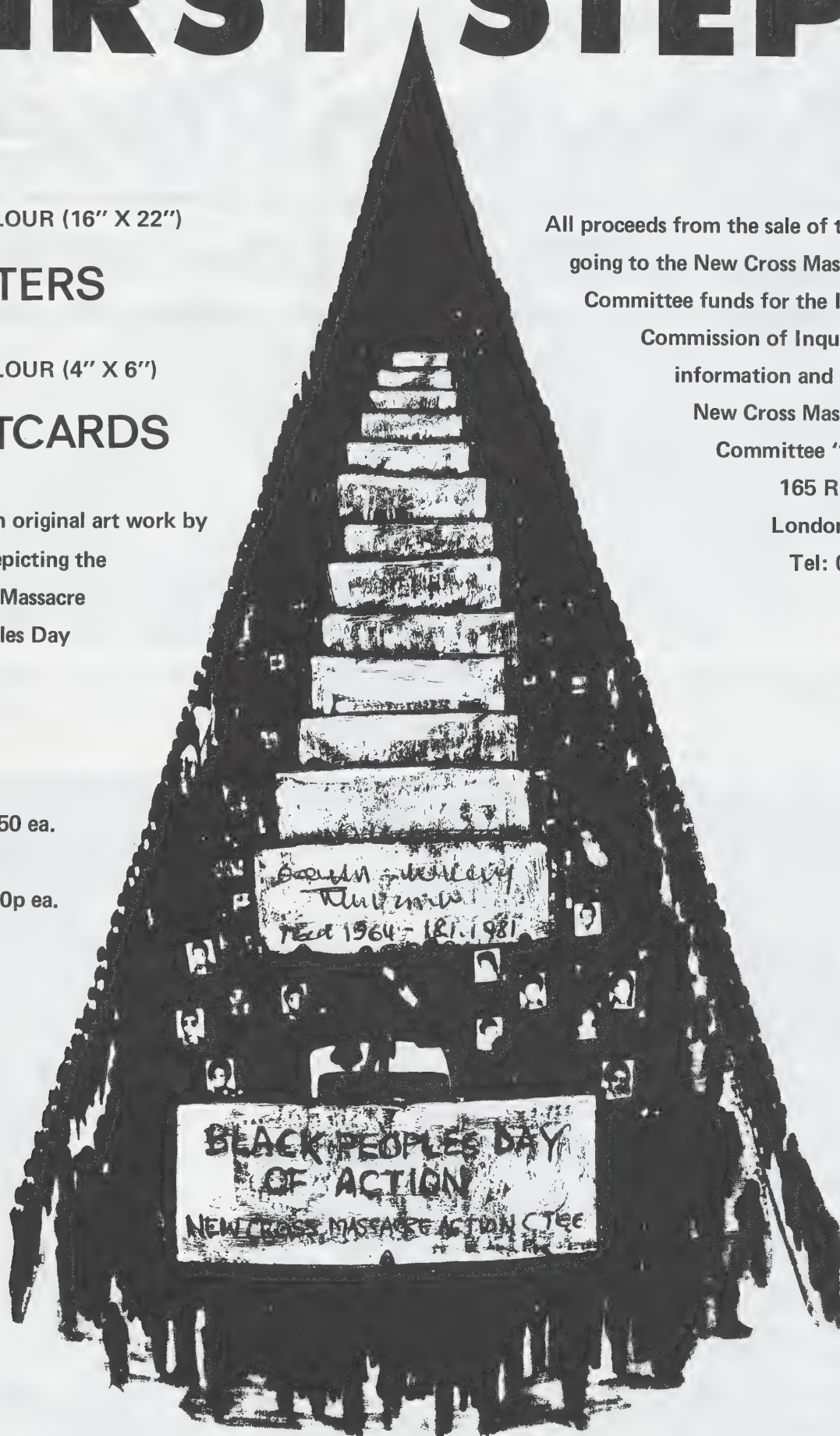
based on an original art work by
C. Abuk depicting the
New Cross Massacre
Black Peoples Day
of Action,
2nd March
1981

Posters £1.50 ea.

Postcards 20p ea.

All proceeds from the sale of this work are
going to the New Cross Massacre Action
Committee funds for the International
Commission of Inquiry. Further
information and orders from
New Cross Massacre Action
Committee "First Steps"

165 Railton Road
London SE24 OLU
Tel: 01-737 2268



Bradford 12

The trial of the Bradford 12 has begun at the Leeds Crown Court. It is slated to last for five weeks. 12 young Asians have been indicted on several conspiracy charges following the discovery of two crates of petrol bombs on the grounds of St Lukes hospital in Bradford. The court will be picketed daily with mass pickets on Wednesdays. Contact the National Mobilising Committee at Box JK LAP, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2.

New Cross Massacre

The International Commission of Inquiry into the New Cross Fire begins at the Deptford Town Hall on June 21st. Following the failure of the police and the coroner's court to resolve questions raised by the massacre on January 18th which claimed the lives of 13 young blacks, the New Cross Massacre Action Committee is organising an International Commission of Inquiry which will investigate all areas of the massacre. Contact the New Cross Massacre Action Committee at 165, Railton Road, Brixton London SE24 Tel: 01-737 2268

Deportations

The Migrant Action Group continues the fight to prevent the deportations of workers back to the Phillipines. To date they have managed to win 30 of these cases. A picket of the Home Office, held on Tuesday, March 23rd, highlighted the plight of these workers. The Migrant Action Group invites the public to write to Timothy

Raison (Minister of State at the Home Office) and to your own MP demanding that these workers be allowed to remain in the UK. Contact: Migrant Action Group, c/o 68 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JR.

The Khan Family Defence Campaign

Paireen and Shankat Khan and their two British born children are threatened with deportation. They have been classified as illegal entrants and have no right of appeal to the immigration tribunal. To date the Defence Campaign has been successful in getting the Home Office to suspend the removal order of February 25th.

Donate to the Khan Family Defence Campaign c/o 593, Stockport Road, Manchester 13 or Tel: 061-225 5111 for speakers, leaflets etc.

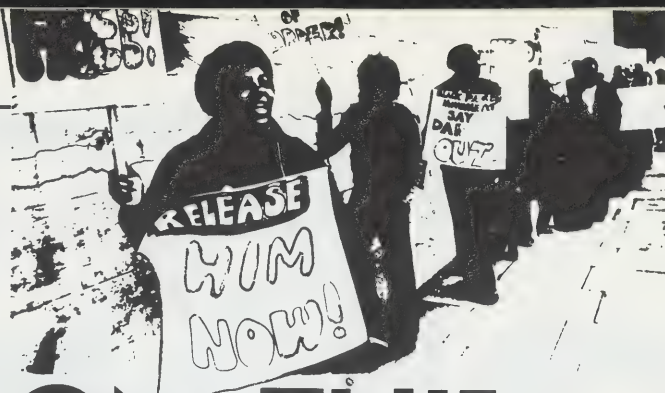
Labour Movement and Racism in Coventry

The Coventry Trades Council is organising a conference on Racism at the Main Hall, Coventry on Saturday 8th May 1982, from 10.30am to 4.30pm.

The conference will devise ways to fight racism at the work place, in the Trade Union and Labour Movement and state racism.

Britain Out Of Ireland

To commemorate the death of the 10 Irish Hunger strikers, who died last year, and to continue the campaign for the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland and self-determination for the Irish people, a broadly based organising committee comprising MPs,



ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL. BY STAFFORD HOWE

GLC Councillors, community organisations, the women's movement, writers, Trade Unions and ex-soldiers will be holding a demonstration on Saturday 8th May 1982 assembling at Speaker's Corner, Hyde Park at 1pm. It is hoped that included among the speakers would be a relative of one of the hunger strikers.

Paul Worrell Campaign

Paul Worrell died while in custody at Brixton Prison. His family and friends are far from satisfied with the officially stated cause of death, that he hanged himself. They are also protesting the fact that he was in prison at all when he should have been in hospital. The Paul Worrell Campaign calls for a pub-

lic enquiry and needs funds to help the campaign along. Contact: The Paul Worrell Campaign c/o Simba Project 48/50 Artillery Place, Woolwich SE18. Tel: 317 0451

Sickle Cell

The Sickle Cell Society needs £5000 to purchase a computer and word processor for the Sickle Cell Centre at Willesden General Hospital. Sickle Cell is a disease which affects black people in the main.

Donations to Sickle Cell Society, c/o Brent Community Health Council, 16 High Street, Harlesden, London NW10 4LX. or call 01-459 1292 Ext 235

L & H Presents

From Trinidad -- EXPLAINER -- Rass Mass, Chambers
From Monserrat -- ARROW -- Soca Rhumba, Bills Bills
at the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, London, W8.

In a Caribbean Calypso Festival on Saturday, 5th June, 1982

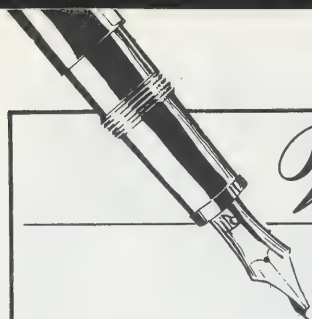
Also appearing:— From Dominica — Roy Alton — Iron Lady

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London All Stars Steel Band, Marabunta Soca Band, Lord Sam Soca Wax, and
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From 7.00pm to 1.00am. Tickets £5.00 in advance At the door £6.00.

For tickets by post, cheques and postal orders payable to L&H Promotions send with SAE to A Holder.
243 Westbourne Grove, Ladbroke Grove, W11.



Without Malice

The Thornton Heath Debacle

C M Anwar MA MIPR is the Senior Community Relations Officer at the Croydon Council for Community Relations. He is obviously a type who derives "extreme pleasure" from other people's tragedy. More than that, he tends to be "greatly appreciative" when the opposite is required.

The context is the police investigation into the murder of Terence May which took place in Thornton Heath on 1 June 1981. Several young blacks were detained for questioning in this matter. Some were charged with murder, riot and affray. Others were summoned as witnesses. They all complained, at the trial, that the police forced them to make statements implicating themselves and their friends, and that the statements were not true. Much more is at stake. During the trial, it was revealed that young blacks on Anwar's patch were under physical attack by white fascists for three days prior to May's death. To this day no single white person has been charged.

Yet C M Anwar MA MIPR saw fit to write to Commander John Cracknell at Croydon Police Station with glowing recommendations about police behaviour during the investigations. It gave him "extreme pleasure" to convey his "admiration" for the "effective and fair way" the police ensured peace in Croydon. He was

also "greatly appreciative" of police cooperation in tackling a difficult situation. Not content, Anwar gushed on; "special thanks to Chief Inspector Brian Turner and Inspector Patrick Hook who have worked relentlessly. Blah! Blah! Blah!"

Anwar's grovelling had far from harmless consequences. When defence counsel challenged the police evidence at the trial, accusing officers of impartiality and coarse bullying, Anwar's letter was duly produced to impress the jury. The upshot? Several years imprisonment for 10 young blacks.

We await the Queen's Honours list to see if Anwar is suitably rewarded.

Anti Police Propaganda

The police "brutally" beat up a Jamaican couple in their London home. They were "guilty of monstrous, wicked and shameful conduct in the name of justice". The family was subjected to a "catalogue of violence and inhuman treatment by young police officers". They "unlawfully invaded" this black household then proceeded "to cover up their brutal savage and sustained variety of assaults".

"These police officers are liars. I am forced to the conclusion there has been an orchestrated attempt (by the police officers) to mislead the court in order to cover up illegality and unjustified use of force".

"They (the police) assaul-

ted this defenceless man in his own home, with a weapon, and beat him up in a brutal inhuman way with the object of inflicting pain and injury on him".

Who can the author of those extreme statements be? Ken Livingstone, the red trouble-maker in County Hall? Or a black Marxist, revolutionary subversive? Wrong again! It was Justice Mars-Jones giving judgement in a civil case for damages against the police. The suit was brought by Mr and Mrs White, a black couple whom the police assaulted in an illegal raid on their home. Mars-Jones awarded damages to the tune of £51,932.

Head Smashing in Brixton

L Division police chief, Commander Fairbairn, is a man with a burning desire. He is on the look out for potential recruits for his special constabulary in Brixton. He knows what he wants and has a knack for spotting a potential recruit.

The Commander mobilised 400 local citizens to discourse with them about rising street crime levels and his methods for combatting this crime wave. The chief inveighed his audience with the slogan, 'Help us, help you, help others stop street crime'. After showing his slides, displaying his plugged security locks, and other paraphernalia, Fairbairn invited suggestions from the audience.

Vigilante squads are what is required, screamed a fascist activist. He and his mates were ready "to go down to the Front Line", haunt of the black unemployed, and smash the 'bastards' heads."

Always a man for law and order, the commander promptly dissociated himself from such violent illegality. But he could recognise talent when he saw it. The young man and his friends were obviously in line for recruitment. Head smashers at that. Why not join my special constabulary? invited the Commander.

The Priest and the Villains

The Reverend Peter Myles has suddenly hit the headlines. Following clashes between police and young blacks in Notting Hill, Reverend Myles has

emerged, not in his spiritual role, but as an expert on black crime.

His thesis is that there are 11 villains (not 10 mind you, or even 12) who organise drug pushing among 12 year olds, together with affiliated protection rackets in Notting Hill. These allegations were printed by the 'Daily Mail', the 'Daily Telegraph' and the 'Guardian' as hard facts. Add to these another offering; that these villains are closely associated with so called charitable status organisations which receive and do not account for government grants.

When Myles was probed on these allegations, he told us that these were not facts at all; that he had been told them by some locals and he did not know whether they were true. Asked to name the so called charitable status organisations, Myles rejoined that he did not have a single name. "I was simply told that they exist", he said defensively.

The good Reverend has informed us that he has made a complaint to the Press Council about the 'Daily Mail' report. And another thing: Myles is not only the vicar of St Peter's as published, he is the police/church liaison officer at the local Deanery.

Withholding Evidence

We will not accept the journalistic advice of Mr Martin Rabstein of the Lewisham CCR (see letters page). He advises that we rename this column *Without Aforethought*. And why? We were wrong, he says, about the refusal of Mr Asquith Gibbs, Lewisham CRO, to hand over crucial evidence for the New Cross inquest. Rabstein affirms that the crucial evidence had indeed been handed over. What he has failed to mention is that the statement was given to Mr Ken Williams after Errol Williams had left the witness box and when it was quite useless. Nor does Mr Rabstein address himself to the fact that Mr Gibbs had turned down a request for the statement before the inquest was called, and had consistently advised Mrs Williams to withhold the information from the inquest lawyers. Over to you Martin.

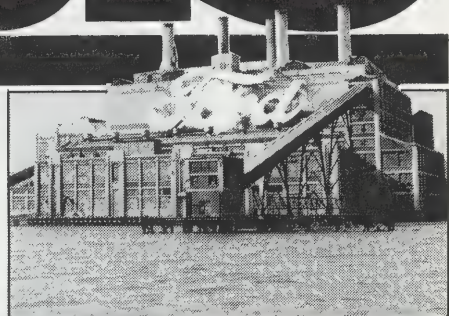
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The state of play at Fords

Asian and West Indian workers are particularly well represented on the shop floors of Ford's Assembly plants, a major area of industrial production in the British economy.

Below, a worker at Fords, Langley, outlines the state of play on the shop floor following the failure of the recent strike attempt and the role of West Indian and Asian workers in the general struggles in the various plants.



Following the defeat of Leyland workers towards the end of last year, there is no doubt that many working class people were looking to the possibility of a major struggle at Ford as a focus for the mounting anger against the Thatcher government. They had good reason for their hopes. Over the years, Ford workers have earned a reputation both for militancy and as a political force. Time and again battles at Ford have taken place at moments of political crisis and have had a powerful impact.

UPRISINGS ON THE STREETS AND A BATTLE AGAINST FORD'S DISCIPLINE CODE

With such a history of militancy, it was not surprising that some people looked to the Ford workforce for a lead. The question was posed: was this the year that Ford workers would take into industry the momentum of the uprisings on the streets of Brixton, Southall, Toxteth and Moss Side during the spring and summer? There were hopeful signs. Three Ford locations have connections with Toxteth, Southall and Brixton: Halewood with Toxteth; the Langley truck plant with Southall, where many of the plant's Asian workers live; and the Dagenham plant, which draws many of its workers from Brixton and other areas in London affected by the summer revolt. In each one of these uprisings there were Ford workers who played their part. And in each of the plants, the uprisings were the main topic of conversation for some days.

Even before the uprising in Toxteth, it was clear that the long tradition of resistance and struggle in Liverpool had not been broken by record mass unemployment in the city. The spontaneous shop floor walk-out against the notorious Ford Disciplinary Code by workers at the Halewood Assembly plant and Body plant for two weeks in May was a good example of this. The Disciplinary Code had been imposed on Ford's workforce out of the blue and without union agreement seven months earlier. It was yet another attempt to stamp out shop floor struggles by suspending, without pay, for two days, any section or individual that took part in an unofficial stoppage (even if for only a few minutes). In effect, it involved a fine of two days' pay — about £30. But after the two week strike at Halewood, Ford had to admit defeat and withdrew the Disciplinary Code. It was an important victory.

At Ford Langley, the growing confidence of the young Asians, after the riots in Southall in 1979 and 1981, was reflected in a series of disputes on the assembly lines over work load and conditions. Young Asian workers are a majority on these lines. These disputes culminated in a week long walk-out to get a particularly racist and abusive foreman (an ex policeman nicknamed PC Plod by the workers) sacked after he threatened a West Indian brother and hit another worker. As usual, the union came to the company's rescue, threatened the brothers who were on strike

and negotiated the foreman's transfer to another section. Compared to Halewood and Langley, the main plants at Dagenham were relatively quiet.

THE PAY CLAIM: INTRODUCING RON TODD

It was against this background of uprisings on the streets and struggles on the shop floor at Halewood and Langley — with the possibility of strikes at Leyland, the mines and in the public sector against Thatcher's 4% pay ceiling — that the first moves on the Ford pay claim began.

The claim itself was straightforward: £20 on the pay, a 35 hour week and better pensions. The key person in drawing up the claim was the chief union negotiator at Ford, Ron Todd — national organiser of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

The first meeting with Ford management to discuss the claim was set for October 30th, and all Ford factories were buzzing with excitement over the national pay strike that had started at Leyland. Everyone was expecting a very low offer from Ford. The white collar workers had been told the week before that they would get no pay rise at all unless it was paid for through extra efficiency and a loss of jobs. It seemed to many people that if the shop floor workers were given the same treatment as the white collar workers, there was a real possibility of Ford workers joining Leyland workers on strike.

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A great deal of research effort has been expended over the past few years on the study of immigration, racial and ethnic minorities and the responses of receiving societies towards newcomers. Much of this work has come from sociologists, social anthropologists and social psychologists and there has been a consequent stress upon fieldwork and theoretical issues. While IMMIGRANTS AND MINORITIES will publish evidence from other disciplines and welcomes contributions from scholars outside history departments, it will be concerned essentially with advancing work which possesses an historical dimension. The journal aims to give an international coverage to its chosen themes and is unrestricted in its chronology.

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In the event Ford did not make that mistake. But the offer, a 4.5% bonus paid only when each factory achieved "satisfactory" efficiency that week, was still an insult. There was clearly a chance of walkout's when workers heard the offer. Immediately Todd was on TV forthrightly condemning the idea that Ford workers might join Leyland workers on strike, and reminding Ford workers that there was still a month of negotiation to come. And within three days, the Engineering Union had smashed the Leyland strike.

By early December, Ford had increased the offer to a miserable 7.4% together with the introduction of a 39 hour week in 1983. And they were still insisting on the efficiency measures which were now to be policed by a panel of full time union officials. This was rejected by Todd who, summoning up the best of his militant talk, again went on TV to spell out what the efficiencies would mean in lost jobs, harder work, more accidents. In a leaflet to all Ford workers, Todd wrote:

"The trade unions were not prepared to enter into an agreement that would make Ford workers poorer and worsen their working conditions"

The deal was rejected by overwhelming majorities in all but three of Ford's 23 factories, and the strike was set to start immediately after the Christmas holiday. What was uppermost in the minds of most Ford workers in voting for the strike was the pay offer itself, which would mean a massive cut in living standards for the third year running, and the efficiencies.

THE GOVERNMENT STEPS IN

Clearly both the government and Ford were worried at the prospect of a long strike. Ford was not in a strong position. During this recession, they couldn't risk losing their place in the market and Ford USA still needed the profits made by Ford UK to avoid bankruptcy. And there was no doubt that a strike in Britain would have shut down all Ford's plants in Europe within a month.

The government for its part was worried at the possibility of simultaneous strikes at Ford, the mines and the railways, with all the potential rank and file political power that could develop. So for the first time ever, the government's arbitrators were sent in to intervene in a Ford dispute. At first they got nowhere, but a few days after Christmas, while the majority of Ford workers were still on holiday, the sell-out began in earnest. On 30 December, Todd said this on the radio:

"All we're saying to the Company is give us a good deal on pensions, give us a good deal on shorter hours and we'll meet all your requirements on efficiency."

And in the 'Financial Times', not a paper much read by Ford workers, he was quoted to the effect that he would accept the pay offer and efficiencies; all he wanted was "more radical movement" on hours and pensions.

And then came the bombshell. The very day before the strike was supposed to start, Todd called an emergency meeting of all convenors in London. He told them that Ford had improved their offer: better pensions in August, the 39 hour week in June, but no more money and no concession on efficiencies. As a result, he said, the unions would not support strike action, and there would be no strike pay. There was total uproar at the meeting and total confusion and anger in the factories as press and radio announced the union leaders' decision to call off the strike. Halewood walked out immediately, Swansea the next day but in mass meetings over the next couple of days the result was a small majority (29,000 to 25,000) to accept the offer.

THE EFFECT OF CHANGES IN PRODUCTION AND DIVISIONS IN THE WORKFORCE

In the end, Halewood and Swansea reluctantly called off their strikes and in industry at least, the tide was not yet turned against the government. So what went wrong?

Looking back, the turning point was the defeat of the Leyland strike. Up to that point there was a real feeling at Ford, shared by militants and moderates alike, that there was a chance to win a significant victory against both Ford and the government. But with the narrow vote at Leyland to end the strike after the right wing leaders of the Engineering Union had withdrawn support for the struggle, many moderate workers at Ford lost the sense of power and confidence which they had been feeling.

From then on the likes of Ron Todd were in full control. There was little anger on the shop floor and no risk of spontaneous walk-out's — as there had been in 1978 leading up to the strike against the Social Contract. Now the feeling was one of resignation. The efficiencies were too much, the pay was too little, if Ford didn't back down there would have to be a strike. But they would await the "official" call

from the trade union negotiators: the enthusiasm for struggle which had existed before the Leyland defeat had evaporated.

Behind the defeat at Leyland and the divisions at Ford lie big changes over the past few years in the organisation of production and division of work in the motor industry. Most important of these is the change from the *piece work* to the *measured day work* (MDW) system of payment. It is little recognised how dramatic have been the effects of this change both on shop floor organisation and on social and political life in this country.

Piece work is a kind of incentive system where the more work you do, the more money you get. Under piece work, it was the shop steward who had to bargain the rate for the job for each worker. This established a real bond between the stewards and the workers in their section. This resulted in strong shop floor organisation, which together with a labour shortage in the boom years of the late 50's and early 60's and a jealous rivalry between sections to make sure that their earnings kept up with each other, pushed earnings in the Midlands car factories to very high levels.

This was hitting at profit levels hard, and the solution agreed by the then Labour government with the employers was to move to MDW. Under this system, workers are given a set amount of work to complete, and it is no point them working harder and producing more because they won't earn any more. They get paid a fixed hourly rate, the same as all other workers in their grade. Under most versions of MDW, there are five or six grades of manual workers: unskilled; semi-skilled class 1; semi-skilled class 2; skilled class 1 and skilled class 2. The hourly rate for each grade is negotiated by national union leaders far removed from the shop floor. And because there is no financial incentive to work harder, MDW is always accompanied by strict disciplinary agreements between the union and management.

So, under MDW the shop steward no longer has any role in wage bargaining. And this was the whole idea of MDW, to break up the relationship of stewards to their section, and thereby smash strong shop floor organisation.

Ford has never been on piecework. That's why wages at Ford were the lowest in the motor industry until the mid 70's, when MDW began to take its toll on the midlands car factories. And because Ford paid low wages, it meant that their factories

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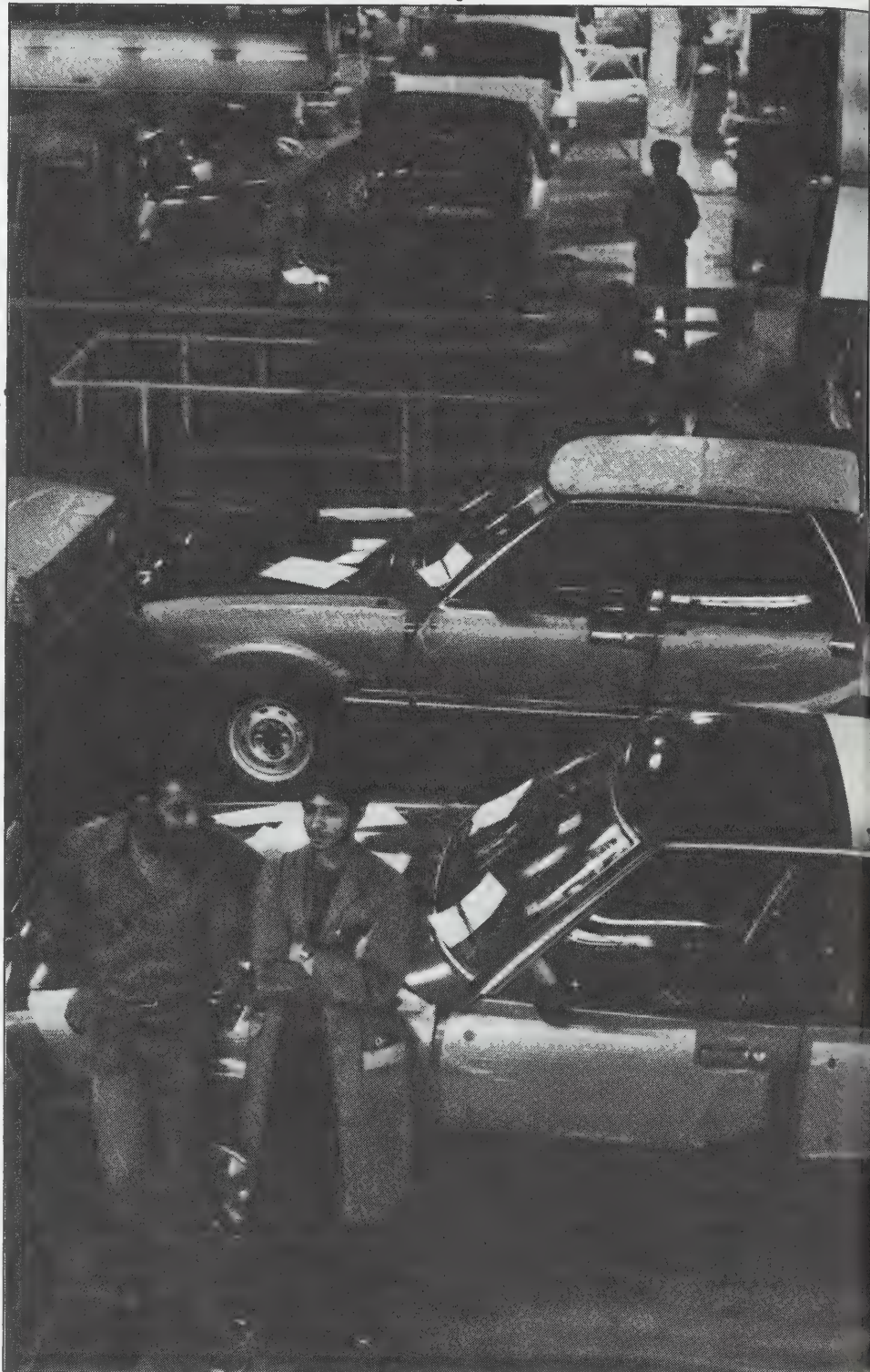
Ian McIntosh
were either in areas of high unemployment (Halewood, Swansea, Bridgend) or that they employed large numbers of immigrant workers. That was their solution in most of the southern plants: Irish workers were followed by West Indian workers and more recently by Asian workers. It won't surprise anyone to find that the divisions of grade, workload and overtime in these southern Ford plants correspond to racial divisions. There are very few West Indian or Asian workers among the skilled sections. The majority of Asian workers are B grade, either working on the assembly lines or feeding the lines with parts. Over the past few years, increasing numbers of West Indian brothers have become C grade workers with greater access to weekend overtime, and they are now being followed by those Asian workers who've worked at Ford for a long time and who are particularly hard workers.

Similar divisions exist within sections on the assembly lines. For example, walking along the Body line at the Langley truck plant, on either the day shift or the night shift, is like walking around the world. The bottom section is where the work is hardest and there is almost never any overtime: the workers are mostly Asian with only the occasional white and West Indian worker. The middle section involves less arduous and slightly more skilled work. There you will see a mixture of African, West Indian, Asian and white workers. The top section is the repair area, an area where the pace of work is not determined by the speed of the line, and where there is the most overtime. The area is predominately white.

The result is that many (but not all) white workers feel that they are one better than their West Indian or Asian workmates, even if they have in fact got a worse job on the line! The West Indian workers who have made it to C grade feel superior to the Asian workers, and so on. There is no doubt that al-

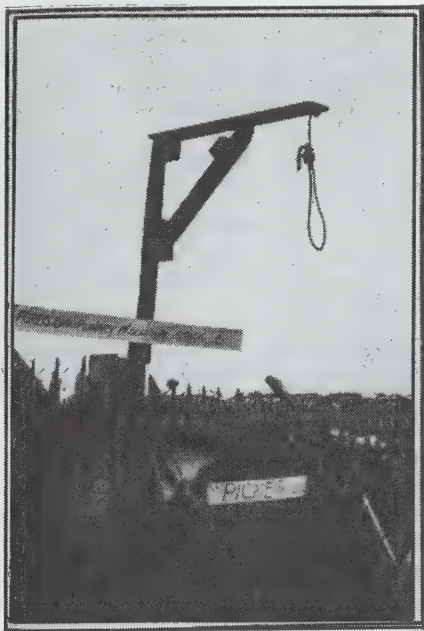
though the divisions of Measured Day Work are practically identical at, say, Ford Halewood and Ford Dagenham, they have far more effect on organisation and unity at Dagenham because of the way management attempts to use race as a means of division and control. This, together with the militant working class traditions in Liverpool (born out of the struggles of Irish Immigrant workers) explain something of the gap in militancy between the southern plants and those in Liverpool and South Wales.

Inside the PTA Plant, Ford Motor Company Dagenham



HIDDEN STRUGGLES IN THE SOUTHERN PLANTS

The past few years have seen a tremendous working class resistance at these southern plants to the Ford methods of discipline and control. But they're not well documented or publicly known. Perhaps the most potent of these, especially in the mid 70's, was the refusal by thousands of workers, to continue working at Ford for low pay and under those conditions. Turnover on the assembly lines was, as late as 1978, over 65% a year. In 1973 and 1974, more people were leaving Ford than could be recruited, with young West Indians completely refusing to come



Scaffold made by Ford workers during the lay-off dispute in 1977.

and work at Ford. This gave an immense strength to those people who did work there, because with such a shortage of workers, Ford had to lower line speed and they were in a weak position to resist workers' struggles.

Lineworkers in particular took full advantage of this situation to fight for their own needs against those of Ford, and this was a fight involving large numbers of Asian and West Indian workers struggling against the divisions in the workforce. Assembly line work is the hardest, dirtiest and most boring work at Ford, and lineworkers get the second lowest pay and suffer the harshest discipline. This was the time to remedy the situation. Section after section was involved in daily disputes, the main issues being grading and wash-up time: time to prepare for work, wash before meal breaks, and time to wash and change in the evening before clocking off. First the solderers won wash-up time, then the doorhangers,

then the fender men and so on. One of the most effective tactics was a mass refusal to train or work with new recruits. If they couldn't be trained, they were useless to Ford, and it cost the workers nothing!

At the same time, there was a general insubordination on the shop floor, disregarding foremen's orders, sometimes driving them out of an area, sabotage of cars and machinery, huge gaps on the lines resulting from disputes, slow downs and sabotage. The breakdown in discipline led to a foremen's strike, complaining that even the most insubordinate worker wasn't being sacked because of the labour shortage, and Ford saw an almost "total disintegration of the workforce" (company quote).

Ford's response to all this was to try to divide the workforce by laying off all lineworkers without pay at any time of the day or night whenever a dispute broke out. Throughout 1973, anger about these layoffs grew, and they erupted in two big riots in August and September 1973 (which were repeated in 1976 when Ford again used repeated lay-off's). In July 1974, a lay-off of lineworkers in the Assembly plant because of a wash-up dispute by repair mechanics led to some lineworkers refusing to start work the next night:

"The final assembly areas refused to start working, and we crowded down off the line, demanding full pay for the previous shift. The convenor showed up but couldn't speak until he'd taken his tie and suit jacket off and looked less like a boss. He quote the Blue Book at us, and was drowned out: he said everyone should go back to work; eventually he gave up and went home for the night. All other workers were still on full pay without working, and were mostly reluctant to join in. Then the Asian lads had the idea of blockading the roll-off area, preventing finished cars being driven off. The white blokes and the West Indians thought it was a good idea, and we stayed there all night with management standing by helplessly.

Before the struggle, the Asians, whites and West Indians had all been fairly separate social groups. But after, we all started playing dominoes together, talking together — it made a real difference" — worker involved in the PTA blockade.

All these struggles have subsided in the last three years, both because of the recession, which has meant much less turnover, of labour, and because of a concerted attempt by the unions to reassert their authority on the shop floor. They have allowed militants to be sacked, and in 1977 smashed a major

strike and occupation at Dagenham against unpaid lay-off's. Nevertheless, the struggle goes on with sabotage, "unenthusiastic working" (as Ford put it), occasional walk-outs on the lines, violence against foremen (only in February, an Asian brother at Ford Langley was sacked for allegedly breaking a massive piece of wood three times while hitting out at a foreman who had called him a black bastard and was trying to get him to work harder). And after the sell-out this year, absenteeism on the lines went up to a record 22% at both Dagenham and Langley (it's normally 8%) as people individually expressed their disgust at what had happened. This caused a big loss of production.

THE BATTLES INSIDE THE UNION

All these struggles have been reflected in growing battles inside the unions. Under MDW, the unions are a main agent of discipline and control, and there is strong pressure on convenors and senior stewards from union leaders to make sure that "members carry out their side of the agreements we enter into with the Company". In other words, accept Ford's discipline.

The result is that the convenors and senior stewards at Ford simply do not represent lineworkers, and despite the fact that far more than half of the workforce in the southern plants are Asian or West Indian, out of the total 138 senior stewards at Ford, there are only four West Indian stewards and only one Asian. Ironically, the one Asian steward is an old man at Ford Langley who represents a privileged area, and year after year, young militant Asians on the lines have been trying to topple him from power within the union, with hundreds turning up at union meetings and violence breaking out as on each occasion the union hierarchy has taken his side. But as a result of these struggles, there are now increasing numbers of Asian and West Indian stewards representing line workers, and their presence will be increasingly felt.

THE STRUGGLES TO COME AT FORD

Ford workers are not defeated, and we can be sure that the coming year will see a whole series of guerilla struggles against the efficiency measures. The sell-out this year taught many people many lessons — not least of which is the simple fact that union leaders cannot be trusted and that new forms of organisation and struggle, both within the union and outside the union structures on the shop floor, are needed.

Migrants under the

BY SHAN NICHOLAS AND
STEPHANIE d'OREY

"I am a foreigner, I didn't vote. If I could have done I would have voted for Mitterand", was the phrase frequently heard in France during the May elections last year. France's 4 million migrant workers are not able to vote and expect Mitterand to resolve their intolerable and insecure status. The Socialist Party victory signalled the reversal of 23 years of political repression. Before this radical landslide in French politics, migrants, including second generation migrants, lived under constant threat of deportation, could not play any part in the democratic process and lacked basic civil rights.

Threats of deportation for political activism or minor criminal offences and the lack of legal collective expression left them politically impotent. In spite of the fact that France may be the only country they know and French their only language, their status remained that of 'foreigners'.

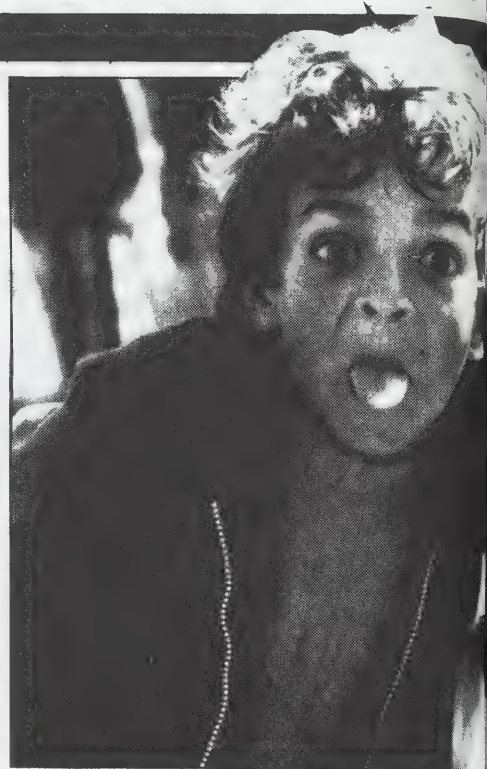
Now, seven months after the elections, many pro-migrant liberal policies have already been put into effect. These resulted from a sustained left wing pro-migrant movement dating from 1968.

Mitterand has stated that he is deeply opposed to any attack on the "rights, dignity, sensibility and liberty of the individual" and has promptly implemented many of his promised migrant reforms. M. Autain, Secretary of State responsible for migrant affairs, listed several important changes in an interview in 'Le Monde' at the end of last year. Firstly, the ending of deportations for second generation migrants (but only provisionally for adults); the return to automatic renewal of work permits (made conditional by Giscard's government); the reuniting of families and the granting of work permits to dependants; and the automatic granting of marriage licences (formerly often refused).

POLICE OPPRESSION

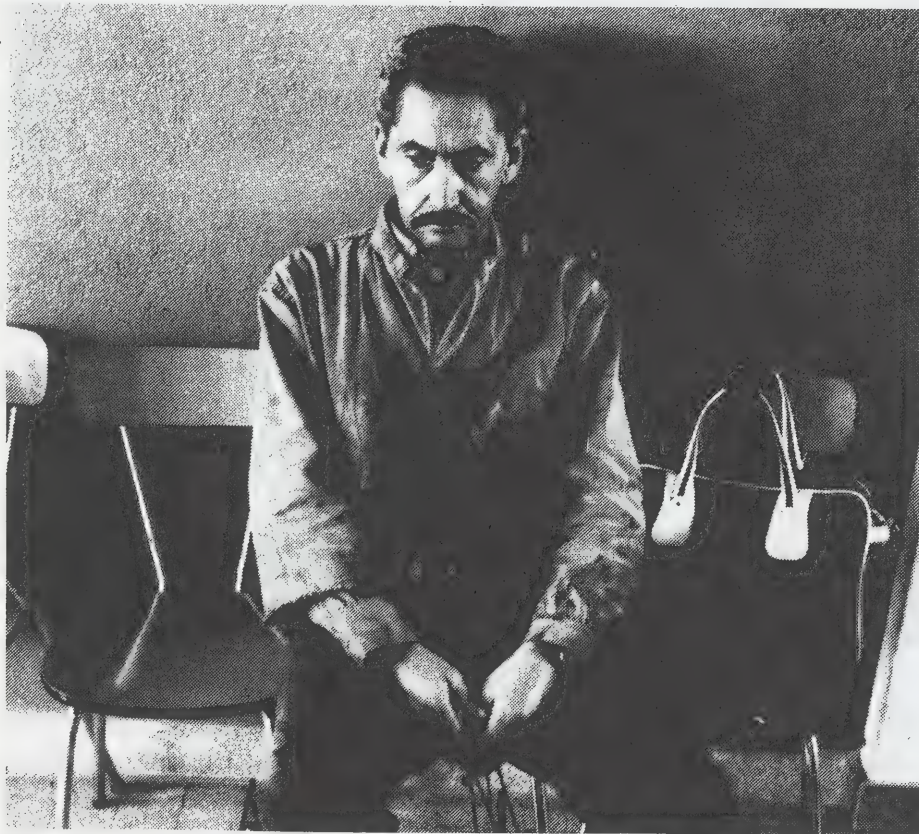
The regularisation of the papers of many of the 300,000 illegal immigrants has now been carried out, and the legislation controlling the rights of foreigners to organise politically has been reformed. The present government is also taking a strong line on another area of conflict i.e. the relations between the police and migrants.

Under Giscard, police controlled many areas of life in France through



the 'Prefecture' and this has been especially so for migrants. About 30% of migrants are of North African or black African origin and it is they who have been the target of racism, often from the police. Giscard's anti-migrant policies gave the administration and the police large areas of discretion which laid black migrant workers open to widespread abuse, without any hope of legal redress. One of the most frequent complaints heard against the police was that they would hold onto essential documents submitted to them for renewal. In a country where papers are needed constantly, this created additional problems for migrants. Together with street and metro identity checks, this was a fatal combination for many migrants, thrusting them into a situation of illegality which often ended in deportation. Many complained of violence at the hands of the police. Migrants were at the mercy of the police in every area of their lives, even in the requesting of a marriage licence.

M. Gaston Defferre, Minister of the Interior and Mayor of Marseille, has made police reform a priority. Three days after coming to power, Mitterand stopped deportations; in June 1981 M. Defferre met police unions and ordered the police to rid itself of the tarnished image which "certain abuses of police functions" had given it. "Racist and brutal behaviour" must be elimin-



Rapho

e Mitterand regime



ated, he said.

Many police are unhappy with the reforms, and, in July, raided migrant areas in Paris and Marseille, attacking black people, to make their point clear. A Toulouse policeman arrested a Moroccan in June, saying "If Gaston Defferre has suspended deportations, he hasn't cancelled deportation orders."

M. Defferre is committed to the idea of policing by consent, however, and has demoted the post of 'Prefect' in his decentralisation plans and put liberal policemen in key positions. Further, he aims to make the use of nazi insignia illegal, and has told police to be vigilant about anti-semitic language and publications.

DEPORTATIONS

The Lyon hunger strike of last year epitomised the growing and widespread anger against arbitrary deportations and gives a clue as to why Mitterand gave this issue such importance. Deportations had risen steadily since the first immigration controls of 1974. In 1980 8,000 people were deported and 111,000 turned away at frontiers. Three quarters of those deported in 1979 were North African or Black African and 50% of these were Algerian.

Deportations were swift and brutal. The flimsiest of justifications were used, such as shoplifting or motoring offences. The charge of a 'threat to public order'

could simply mean having union membership. One notorious case involved the theft of a pair of trousers by a thirteen year old boy, who was only deported for the offence when he reached eighteen. Now, these abuses are over, and those unemployed or too ill to work will be allowed to stay, with the exception of those 'illegal migrants' without work or promise of it. But those young migrants who returned to France illegally and were forced to live underground, now know that France is their home not only in spirit but in law.

POLITICAL ORGANISING

Another important change was introduced on 2nd September 1981. Migrants could now form organisations freely. The question of assuring a political voice for migrants is not simple. The 1939 legislation, now repealed, was designed ostensibly to protect the state against Nazi infiltration, although it was used against Communist groups too. And in recent years this law created a blanket ban on any migrant political activity. The problem for the present government is how to curb extreme right wing elements while allowing political expression.



Previously, no group could have more than 25% 'foreign' membership, and several important anti-racist groups worked illegally. The only groups allowed to operate freely were either sports or cultural groups with no political aims, or the embassy based 'amicales' which served a useful surveillance function for the French and foreign police. Information passed on by the 'amicales' resulted allegedly in deportations or arrests in countries of origin. Freedom of association, together with the democratisation of the funding system — frequently used to oppose migrant issues, opens the way to a new independence in migrant affairs.

The effect of the previous government's political repression is that many migrant workers were politically active in an underground manner reminiscent of the early U.S. civil rights struggles. Mitterand's election gave hope to many migrants and he has promised them a more dignified place in French society.

Although the 'threat to public order' clause still exists and can be used for deportation, the Mitterand government stresses that 'extreme benevolence' is being shown towards 'illegal migrants'. However, some critics suggest that the reforms still haven't gone far enough. For instance, they demand that no conditions at all should be applied to those 'illegal migrants' asking for papers during the amnesty. Mitterand denies that this is repressive. He argues that a firm but generous policy is needed to prevent migrants becoming a burden on the state. M. Autain has stated that France's present economic situation demands firmness in regard to new arrivals but that respect is owed to those migrants who came to France by official invitation during the period of industrial growth.

Mitterand has recently been showing signs of weakening in implementing the socialist programme on migrant workers which he held in opposition. Although several back-bench deputies have put pressure on him to keep to his election promises, it now seems unlikely that Mitterand will grant the vote at local level as originally proposed. It remains to be seen how far he will go in implementing the reforms and in respecting the hopes he has raised of granting migrants full political rights.



FREE FOR ALL

The nine year old leader

By C L R James

Free For All. I love that title. Freedom is a very rare thing: it is for example rare in the account of great events. It was only a few years ago that a French historian really got down to it and brought out some of the greatest and most important events in the French Revolution. You may think that that is History, with a capital 'H', because it is one of the greatest events and everybody, particularly the professional historians, ought to know something about it.

But enough of that. I have been exercising my freedom to say a few things about history which are not only important in general but relate directly to the riots which took place in Britain during last summer. Darcus Howe is talking to an American about those events. He picks up a paper and reads this.

"Listen to this", he said, "After the uprising in Moss Side last July they appointed a local Manchester barrister called Hytner to enquire into what happened, and how it started. Here's what he writes:

" 'At about 10.20pm a responsible and in our view reliable mature black citizen was in Moss Lane East, and observed a large number of black youths whom he recognised as having come from a club a mile away. At the same time a horde of white youths came up the road from the direction of Moss Side. He spoke to them and ascertained they were from Withenshaw. The two groups met and joined. There was nothing in the manner of their meeting which in any way reflected a prearranged plan. There was a sudden shout and the mob stormed off in the direction of Moss Side police station. We are given an account by another witness who saw the mob approach the station, led, so it was claimed, by a nine-year old boy with those with Liverpool accents in the van.' "

You believe that you have read this and that you understand this: pardon me if I tell you that I don't think you have. Let me select a passage and draw it to your attention.

[He] observed a large number of black youths whom he recognised as having come from a club a mile away. At the same time a horde of white youths came up the road from the direction of Moss Side. He spoke to them and ascertained that they were from Withenshaw. The two groups met and joined. There was nothing in the manner of their meeting which in any way reflected a prearranged plan. There was a sudden shout and the mob stormed off in the direction of Moss Side police station.

That my friends is the revolution. There is no highly educated party leading the backward masses. There is no outstanding leader whom the masses follow because of his great achievement in the past. There had been no prearranged plan. They met and joined, they shouted and they stormed off, (note this particularly) in the direction of Moss Side police station.

The great leader? Before I deal with that, let me quote from one of the greatest historians of the 20th century. I can quote at once because I made quotations from it in 'The Black Jacobins' (edition Allison & Busby page 338n).

... It is therefore in the popular mentality, in the profound and incurable distrust which was born in the soul of the people, in regard to the aristocracy, beginning in 1789, and in regard to the king, from the time of the flight to Varennes, it is there that we must seek the explanation to what took place. The people and their unknown leaders knew what they wanted. They followed the Girondins and

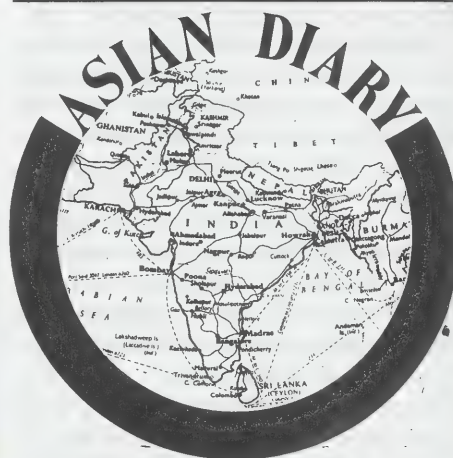
afterwards Robespierre, only to the degree that their advice appeared acceptable.

"Who then are these leaders to whom the people listened? We know some. Nevertheless, as in all the decisive days of the revolution, what we most would like to know is forever out of our reach; we would like to have the diary of the most obscure of these popular leaders; we would then be able to grasp, in the act so to speak, how one of these great revolutionary days began; we do not have it."

So much for these great leaders. This time we know that it was a boy of nine who was leading this particular part of the revolution.

I don't think I have anything more to say here. But for the greater part of my long life, I have been saying and preaching and teaching "the two groups met and joined. There was nothing in the manner of their meeting which in any way reflected a prearranged plan. There was a sudden shout and the mob stormed off in the direction of Moss Side police station."

Work at it please.



Changes in Bangladesh

For the fifth time in its brief history, on 24 March, Bangladesh had its government changed by force of arms. The foreign press described the coup of Lieut Gen. H.M. Ershad as bloodless. The tanks rolled from the barracks, the troops surrounded the seats of government and raiding parties arrested ministers and a few industrialists and top officials from their homes in Dacca. No one has yet been shot. Most of the arrested people belonged to the Bangladesh Nationalist Party of former president Abdus Sattar.

And Sattar himself astounded the nation by appearing on radio and television soon after the coup to welcome the dismissal of his own government. Ershad, in return, has promised him immunity from prosecution and has described him, to the international press, as an 'honourable man' who had lost control of the politicians in his party and in his government. Sattar's short lived regime was itself inaugurated through the assassination of Zia-Ur-Rahman,

Ershad's coup has effectively arrested the evolution of peasant and youth organisations in Bangladesh. The General has told the press that elections will probably be held only after two years if certain targets that he has in mind, but will not publicly announce, are fulfilled. He has also said that at the end of that term it is possible that he will step out of army uniform and into civilian life as President of the nation. Meanwhile, all political discussion has been banned and the newspapers have been put under martial law injunctions.

The story of Bangladesh is that of an incomplete revolution. Bangladesh has had to fight two nationalist struggles, the first against the British in the early decades of this century when it was granted freedom from the Raj and formed the Eastern state of the new nation of Pakistan, and the second, a war against the colonisation of itself by the West Pakistanis.

Its independence from Pakistan was precipitated by the victory of its chief political party led by Mujib-Ur-Rahman, the Awami League, which was elected on a programme of Bengali nationalism at the first elections which Pakistan had held since its independence from Britain. The martial law dictator of all Pakistan, Yahya Khan, allowed the elections but did not accept their results. Neither he nor Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the leader of West Pakistan's majority party, was willing to accept that Mujib, elected with the largest number of members of parliament, albeit all from East Pakistan, would be de facto Prime Minister of the whole country. Yahya Khan sent in the troops and the Awami League declared itself the legitimate government of a separate Bangladesh and called on the people to resist.

With the aid of the Indian army, the Pakistanis were humiliatingly defeated and Awami League came to power and disarmed the revolutionary army it had called into being to defeat the Pakistanis. The regiments of the Pakistani army, which were from East Pakistan, formed the brunt of the new nation's armed forces. Ershad, no general at the time, had been pro Pakistan and had not sup-

ported the revolutionary factions of the Bangladesh struggle.

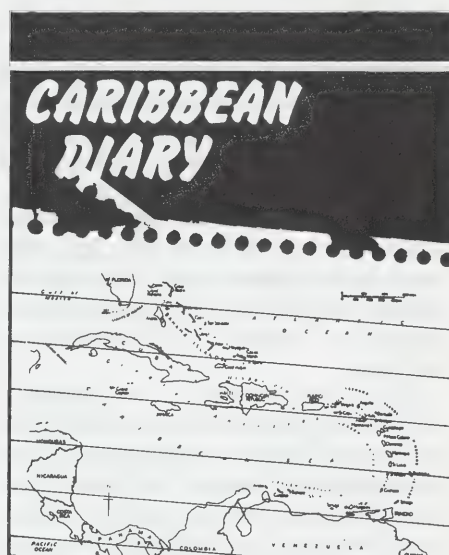
Unlike India, Bangladesh does not have a developed bourgeoisie and a firm political middle class which has found representation in parliament and in the various state legislatures. Bangladesh's civilian governments do not last because the establishment of a government, through elections, is the signal for the party which has won the election to become a corrupt ruling elite with not even the semblance of straight dealing, honesty or any responsibility to the electorate. A symptom of this trend is the fact that there were, before Ershad abolished them, forty-two ministries to run the country. The proliferation of ministerial posts and departments is simply an indication of the kind of pay-off and access to corruption that a prime minister has to hand out to the instant ruling class.

The military governments of Bangladesh are also precariously placed mainly because of the speed with which the armed forces were generated. And five coups, led by army officers, some of them of relatively junior rank, have led to divisions in the army which threaten it with disintegration. If the armed forces can't hold as one force, Bangladesh will be faced with an internal war and the absence of any body of people able to run the administration. The treatment of political parties by successive army regimes has not encouraged the growth of political institutions.

Beneath the political upheavals are the hard facts of poverty in Bangladesh. Ershad's first appointment to his 'cabinet' was the bureaucrat, Mr A.M.A. Muhith, a former alternate director of the World Bank and an executive director of the Asian Development Bank. Until last year, the same man, Muhith was the Secretary of the 'External Resources Division' of the Bangladesh government, a polite name for the international negotiator who will beg other countries for aid.

And aid is urgently required. According to the former government estimates, Bangladesh needs investments from between 3 and 4 hundred million US dollars over the next year. The coup, though looked at with some apprehension at first from the US, has now been welcomed by the main investing nations. Ershad hopes to supervise Bangladesh's main leap into industrialisation. It is an area of cheap labour and developing markets for countries such as the US, Japan, Australia, Canada and even an area of investment for the Gulf State. These investors meet this month in Paris to consider how and where they will invest in Bangladesh. Ershad is there to make sure that they are presented

with the attractions of a country in which military rule will proscribe political development which, in our part of the world, inevitably leads to turbulence.



Responses to Reagan's Caribbean basin initiative

BY GERRY KANGALEE

Our Caribbean Correspondent

The net is closing around the Caribbean. Super-power politics have become a frightening reality, and the petty bourgeois leaders of our island mini-states have been falling over themselves to line up behind the Western or the Eastern super-power in a futile bid for aid and protection.

Vere Bird, the Prime Minister of newly independent Antigua, has taken the lead in prostrating himself before the American dollar. Bird, in his latest obscenity, called upon the Americans to provide military 'protection' for the Caribbean. Bird's infamous regime provided the Space Research Corporation with testing and transshipment facilities for arms destined for South Africa. He has also turned Antigua into a nest of Casino gambling and prostitution and a haven for criminals of the Vesco variety. Is it any wonder then that Bird has welcomed Reagan's restatement of the Monroe Doctrine under the new title of Caribbean Basin Initiative?

Eugenia Charles of Dominica, Mrs Thatcher's alter ego, has also welcomed Reagan's mamaguy. Charles seems prepared to do anything to woo yankee dollars including arb-

bitrary detention of trade unionists like Rawlings Jemmott. Although Jemmott has been released from detention, he has to report to police headquarters everyday, his passport has been seized and his union's records have not been returned. So much for the much-touted Westminster system of Parliamentary Democracy. Eugenia has even supported the American stance on the exclusion of Grenada. Instead of attacking the Americans, she attacked St George's when the Caribbean Development Bank refused an American loan because Washington required that Grenada be excluded.

St Lucian political figure, George Odum, has expressed his opposition to the Caribbean Basin Initiative. John Compton leader of the party in opposition, takes the opposite view. But St Lucia is going through a period of painful convulsion. Banana crop almost destroyed, tourist industry in decline, political factionalism among the petty bourgeois groups, overnight changes of governments, armed forces patrolling the street, violence in the parliament. The contradictions of the capitalist crisis as manifested in the periphery are particularly acute in St Lucia. Instead of uniting the country in the face of

Chambers launched a blistering attack against the USA. The Caribbean Basin Initiative has been diplomatically welcomed by the regime, with the rider that it must be implemented regionally and not bilaterally. This in effect is a rebuff to Reagan's policy of exclusion. At the same time, Chambers welcomed a Cuban delegation and engaged in trade discussion.

The Caribbean Basin initiative in fact is nothing but a propaganda initiative. Its basic provision is for military aid for embattled right-wing regimes. Increased US Government aid may only be used for meeting balance of payments deficits and not for infrastructural development. The free trade provision does not apply to goods covered by international trade agreements. This effectively rules out most of the Caribbean products. In fact the only English speaking territory that will benefit is Reagan's pet — Jamaica. In April Reagan will visit Seaga in Jamaica and then go to Barbados for a holiday, where he expects all the Eastern Caribbean leaders to visit him while sunning and swimming. It is going to be interesting to see which leaders will make the hajj.

On another note. Readers of 'Race Today' may be interested to know that George Weekes' Rebel Team has been



Workers in Campbellville, Guyana working on old sugar land for a housing scheme project.

these tremendous setbacks, the politicians are in a scramble for American and other aid. This is to be expected because the contending factions do not represent the interests of the toiling masses, but of the miniscule fraction of petty bourgeois merchants and professionals.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the Chambers' administration continues to be cautious about all things American. During the election campaign, under pressure from the left, Prime Minister

returned unopposed to the Executive of the Oilfield Workers Trade Union in Trinidad and Tobago. Among the 12-member team are Errol McLeod who is now First Vice President, and David Abdulah, who is now Treasurer. These two comrades are not unfamiliar to the West Indian community in Britain. This brings me to my last point.

Unlike comrades McLeod and Abdulah, I do not have first hand knowledge of the situation in Britain, and would like those who read this column to tell me what subjects they will like me to tackle.

CREATION FOR LIBERATION

MUSIC THEATRE BOOKS FILM

BLACK THEATRE co-operative



by Edgar White

TRINITY

WHERE THERE IS DARKNESS

by Caryl Phillips

Lyric Studio



ON

Plays and playwrights in black theatre

By Akua Rugg

A forum on black theatre was held during the First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books. Two generations of black writers, producers, directors and actors contributed to the debate. Norman Beaton and Pearl Connor described their struggles from the late 40s to establish black theatre in Britain. Farrukh Dhondy, an Asian writer, dispelled the myth that black theatre is still being suppressed. On the contrary, he informed us, the theatrical establishment is falling over itself to commission works by black writers; and indeed, over the last couple of months, plays by Farrukh, Cas Phillips, Mustapha Matura, Alton Kumalo and Edgar White have been staged.

WHERE THERE IS DARKNESS

'Where There is Darkness', a play by Cas Phillips, a young writer born in St Kitts, has recently played to critical acclaim at the Lyric Theatre in Hammersmith. The play is based on a maxim from the heyday of West Indian migration to Britain, that "the quickest way from the gutter to the hills is through London".

The structure of the play is strictly traditional. Lights go up on the sort of set, (the back patio of a select, suburban villa) from which one expects, at any moment, a character will bound enquiring "who's for tennis?" No such polite activity takes place, for this highly desirable residence is the property of Albert Williams, a West Indian immigrant, who has clawed his way to the top. Recriminations, accusations and curses are exchanged in a particularly vicious version of the truth game played during a party thrown to celebrate Albert's realisation of the Great West Indian Dream. He is retiring to the Caribbean.

Phillips has crafted this play solidly, with its well conceived plot and imaginative theatrical devices. The retirement party brings together various members of contemporary society. Hostess to the party is Albert's second wife, she is young, middle class and white. His undergraduate son, from an earlier marriage to an island girl, arrives late at the party. He has a girlfriend from the beads and braids brigade in tow. Ap-

pearing, in vignettes that conjure up his past life in the Caribbean and early days in London, are Albert's first wife, the white woman he 'graduates' to on his crash course to the top and a fellow immigrant, formerly his mentor. All of these Albert has used, abused and discarded. Phillips shows Albert's victory over his humble, immigrant beginnings to be a hollow one. Characters from his past and present emerge like so many grubs eating through the facade of his life, seemingly as polished as the surfaces of his home.

The play works well on several levels. It raises issues that are crucial and relevant to the black community: the pains of exile and dreams of exodus, the struggle on the part of black men for manhood, and on the part of black women for liberation from the double oppression of being black and female.



A scene from *Where There is Darkness* by Caryl Phillips.

Albert is cast as a leading race relations industrialist which throws the audience into the debate of how the growth of that industry has dissipated and corrupted the initiatives and energies of blacks. The pitting of one generation against the next, men against women, black against white, working class values against those of the middle class provide for lively entertainment as the players exchange rallies of observant and often sharp repartee. The use of 'flash back' scenes place contemporary issues in

their proper historical context.

The strengths within the play are seriously undermined by Phillips' weak development of his characters. They are not much more than well researched stereotypes and seem somehow too lightweight to bear the burden of the themes within the play. Their reactions to any development to the plot were so predictable that there was little dramatic tension during the course of the evening. Ultimately, one felt that the characters spring not from Phillips' intimate grasp of the predicament he places them in, but from the tip of his pen.

TRINITY

Edgar White's play 'Trinity', is stimulating, enchanting and intelligent. Perfectly cast and finely acted, the subjects of these three playlets deal with pre-occupations of blacks.

In 'Man and Soul', the first playlet, White tackles the theme of Carnival. He avoids treating the subject in a trite manner by focusing the event not through the relationship of white police/black youth, but through the relationship of two youths, an African and a West Indian who have been raked off the streets and into a detention cell in Notting Hill Police Station.

Both have been divided culturally,

socially and educationally over the centuries. This division is sharply illustrated by their different reactions while in detention. The African rolls out his prayer mat while the young West Indian busies himself with constructing a marijuana joint. They, nevertheless, establish a unity forged in the heat of the politics of Carnival.

The second playlet, 'The Case of Dr Kola', concerns the corrupt practices of the ruling elites in Africa. Here, again, White avoids a banal treatment of this subject, using a dry wit and humour to drive home some serious political

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blacks present to the education system.
The third article by Barbara Beese and Leila
Hassan charts the development of the black
education movement in Britain and the
interventions made by black students and
their parents on this question.

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lessons. The humour of the piece depends, not on the fact that a West Indian actor is 'taking off' an African accent, but from White's keen powers of observation and ability to create an authentic, African type rather than a clumsy caricature. Kola, a deposed government minister, has death, in the shape of a young army officer, staring him in the face. Still, he finds time to pompously and arrogantly muse on the fact that he, a professional man, should have been brought so low by a mere illiterate, his wife. Her only words of English are 'Harrods' and 'credit card'.

'That Generation', the third playlet of Trinity, is an exquisite piece of theatre. With just three players and one simple set, White captures, in spirit as well as in words, the world of an immigrant travelling from Trinidad to London in the 50s. Once again, White approaches this well worn theme from a different angle to the norm. Wallace, the chief character of this piece, leaves Trinidad not out of any material necessity, but out of the necessity to escape the stultifying, social and cultural environment of colonial, island society. The relationship between Wallace and his wife, Phyllis, is also very different from the usual portrayal of black male/female relationships. It admits of affection, companionship and common interests. I shall remember, for a long time to come and with pleasure, Beverley

Martin as Carol, Phyllis's friend, delicately indicating 'when' as Phyllis laces her tea, with rum on what is obviously a typically depressing, English afternoon.

MEETINGS

Meetings, by Mustapha Matura, is set in Trinidad and shows the two worlds that exist, uneasily, side by side on the island. Hugh, a wealthy contractor, lives with his wife, Jean, a successful advertising executive. They inhabit a luxury house complete with swimming pool and space-age kitchen. As Jean is far too busy to lift more than a finger to dial the local take-away for fried chicken, Hugh decides to hire Elsa, a country girl, to cook 'real, old Trinidad food'. Jean, with her straightened hair and fur coat, symbolises the Trinidad that is urban, Americanised and obscenely wealthy. Elsa, with her head tied and faded, cotton frock, personifies a Trinidad that is rural, African and poverty stricken. Hugh finds himself pushed to make a choice as to which of the two worlds he will live in.

Matura seems to be in as great a dilemma as his hero with this play. He can't seem to make up his mind whether it should be a light satiric piece, or a tragic work to be taken seriously. The jokes about the merits of down home cooking and demerits of junk food sort very ill with the development of the plot in which an advertis-

ing campaign Jean is spearheading has tragic consequences not only for her life but for the lives of the entire population of the island. Although the play makes valid points about the decadence and degeneracy of the ruling class in the Caribbean, they are submerged in all the Trinidadian in-jokes about food which for non-Trinidadians soon becomes tedious and boring. It was an inventive and original idea to focus this tale of low living in high places through the eating habits of the protagonists. However, it is an idea more suited to a sketch than to a full-length play.

Black theatre seems, at present, to consist of black writers producing plays dealing with subjects that preoccupy blacks for black theatre companies to perform before mainly white and middle-class audience at established theatrical venues. It seems an inescapable conclusion that blacks working in theatre are unconcerned that a black audience does not exist for their work. This leads them to equate, with progress, gaining a toe-hold with a play here and there in the established theatre of the country. Progress it is not. A vibrant and alert audience awaits them in the black community. It is for these writers to activate and inspire this tremendous potential. After all Ngugi Wa Thiongo did it in Kenya.

National Youth Bureau

Following the retirement of Alec Oxford the Bureau now requires a new

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

The Bureau is the national resource centre for those involved in youth affairs and the social education of young people. It provides information, publication, training, research and development services, and acts as a forum for association, discussion and joint action. Located in modern offices in Leicester, the Bureau has a staff of 70. NYB is an equal opportunities employer.

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For further information about the Bureau, a job description and application form, write to:

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Book Fair images

erie Bloom at International Poetry Reading



The First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books ended as magnificently as events throughout the week-long, cultural festival had indicated. A capacity audience of more than 1000 were entertained by a variety of black, artistic talent at the Camden Town Hall on Sunday 4 April 1982. Forums on black theatre, film, black publishing, racial attacks on black and radical bookshops, a recital by pianist, Maxine Franklin and flautist, Keith Waithe generated an exciting atmosphere during the week 28 March to April 4.

Marxist historian, C L R James, opened the fair itself with an imaginative, historical sweep incorporating Africa, the Caribbean, America and Britain. He set the Book Fair in that context. Close to 100 publishers, guests from the Caribbean, Africa, America and Asia joined some 5000 people to make the fair a major and historic event in British cultural life.



Julian Stapleton

Julian Stapleton

Ekome Dance Group at Variety Concert



Lance Watson

Michael Smith at International Poetry Reading



Julian Stapleton

Ankoor Arts performing at Variety Concert



Julian Stapleton

rl Lovelace at forum on Writers & Critics



Kole Omotoso at forum on Black Theatre in Britain



Lance Watson

I feel this Book Fair has been a great success. I know that within myself I feel a greater fulfilment, having had, by way of the Book Fair, a much better insight into the way black people as a whole see themselves and want to see themselves; what black people have had to put up with in order to achieve the greatest right: the right to freedom of expression.

Do you remember I was telling you (I mentioned it to Linton too) that I hadn't been writing for a while — as though I had a mental block; a lethargy had overtaken my thinking, the cause obviously being a stagnation of ideas and feelings. You said I ought to relax but relaxation was not the only thing I needed. I needed prodding, an eye-opener and something up-lifting to the morale. Admittedly, things which

have been happening in this country of late (police, riots, biased statistics etc) haven't helped to boost any form of morale.

That is why I am glad the Book Fair happened. It gave me a chance to set my mind in motion again. To see so many black people from various parts of the world, to see a "meeting of minds" (Ed Brathwaite's words at the Publisher's Forum) certainly showed there was a source rich in intellect, talent and vigour among black people and restored in me new hope. We are a resilient people!

May Race Today, New Beacon Books and Bogle-L'Ouverture see more years of free expression, morale-boosting — and Book Fairs!

Marlene McLeary

Lance Watson

Chastisement

Is like a judgement
Livin' by the sacrament:
"Wanti-wanti, can't getti
Getti-Getti, no wanti".
When we have little, we craven
When we have plenty, we no want i'.

Chastisement, Mama, chastisement.
I remember when we used to watch the poor children in Biafra
on telly.
You used to seh "Drink up you corn porridge. Look at di poor
children dem starvin' all over di world." An' when you garn out
the room we chuck the porridge out di window.

Chastisement, Mama, chastisement
Whoy, Lahd, I hungry, mam!
Sorry, mama, I never mean to throw weh di porridge.
I never mean to throw weh
di pease soup
di banana an yam
di ochro an salt fish
di dumplin' and chocho
di chicken soup
di pumpkin
di rice and pease.

Chastisement
Is like a judgement
Reaction is on us
You used to tell us, Mama, how when you was a child you never
had nuthin'. In the mountains you used to groan with hunger
Fetch an carry water
Pick coffee
Go to church, sing songs
And groan with hunger

We have everything now.
"We confuse with everthing we have," you say and say.
But Mama, we throw everything weh!

An is chastisement now, Mama.
Unastisement.
I can't take any more.

I wish I could find the dustbin where I throw di pease soup
di banana an yam
di ochro and salt fish
di dumplin' and chocho
di chicken soup
di pumpkin
di rice and pease — and the window where I throw the corn porridge.

Chastisement
Is like a judgement
Livin' by the sacrament
Wanti-wanti can't getti
An getti-getti DEAD.

© Marlene McLeary

For Bob Marley

Dreadlocks gone
from I and I crown of glory
and what to be got to be

yet nobody believe Marley dying
no woman no cry crying
out from the sound system of a heart
Who Jah bless no man curse
but the cancer getting worse

cutting off of locks
a necessary condition
for treating the tumour of the brain
Him lion mane shorn like a lamb
Him born again
walking through the valley of the shadow
of pain

yet nobody believe Marley dying
nobody believe the reggae rainbow
flying home to Zion
without him dreadlock halo

We all know
Babylon is one
to cut off Rasta hair
and throw Rasta in prison

But this time doctor say
for treatment to work
dreadlocks must go
Strange the ways of Babylon
stranger still the ways of Jah

yet nobody believe Marley dying
dying of cancer in Miami

He who would touch no pork
no junk food whether in London or New York
believed only in the natural
I-tal vital
ate of fresh herbs of the field
as laid down by the Good Book
on tours always taking his own cook
He left bodyguards to the politicians
touching no nicotine
partaking only of the holy weed
which the press
say was taken to excess
but which Marley I'm sure
would say is the key to the inner door
the holy herb
filling his mind with the holy word
and the flight of doves
at peace in the shadow of Solomon
Got to have kaya

Strange the ways of Babylon
Now herbless and locksless
this child of Jah in the wilderness
of a malignant growth
yet nobody believe Marley dying
dying of cancer in Miami
it can't be it can't be
shout it out from Trenchtown to Zimbabwe
shake the cornerstone of the Cedars of Lebanon
it can't be no not Marley

But in the grounation of a mother grief
one woman hold her head and cry
one woman Cedella Booker mother of Bob
hear her earthwise heart whisper
one bright morning when my work is over
and deep down she know the time come
cause Jah giveth and Jah taketh
and holding her son locksless head
she reads his favourite psalm
to help him home

'The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures
He leadeth me beside the still waters. . .'

And from the logwood burning love
of her womanheart
black womanhurt inward yearning
Rita Marley I-rie sister I-rie queen
watches the fiery red gold and green
drifting to galaxies
beyond West Kingston
Fly away home to Zion

but thoughts of distant planets
don't make her forget
the sound of bullets
the violence in the streets
the attempt on Marley life
by shootdown hit-and-run
Trenchtown thug politics

and caressing the star of his head
she misses them locks
natty dread natty dread
that often touched her as they lay loving
and to herself she make a vow
not to send her Bob
lockless to his Zion

to the shorn lamb
she shall return him lion mane
she shall see that in his casket
his face be draped
with rays of sun
him antennae of salvation
picking up positive vibration
in his casket
I and I crown of locks
the Bible in one hand
his guitar in the other
like gifts from an ancient Egyptian queen
sending her loved one home to Ra
sending her loved one home to Jah

Everything going to be alright
everything going to be alright
no woman no cry
Marley don't need death
to make a exodus to history
Marley don't need politician
to deem him honourable
Marley would hate a tearful elegy

so let this poem be a spliff
and from the heart of Harlem let a riff
of tribute curl skyward
Let Stevie Wonder in his rainbow darkness
masterblast your song of praise
to the secret ears of plants
From the ground of Zimbabwe
let a freedom song resound
and see the children dance
O see the children dance
forget your sorrow and dance
Let the nyabingi drums chant
a celebration of positive vibration
Let Cedella take a gospel song
and with a mother tender care
nurse it to a breath of reggae
Let the I-threes incense the sky
with riddims of blessings
Little darling please don't shed no tears
and see the children dance
O see the children dance
forget your trouble and dance

cause today is a day beyond mourning
today the sun is a mane of flame
raining a plea to mankind

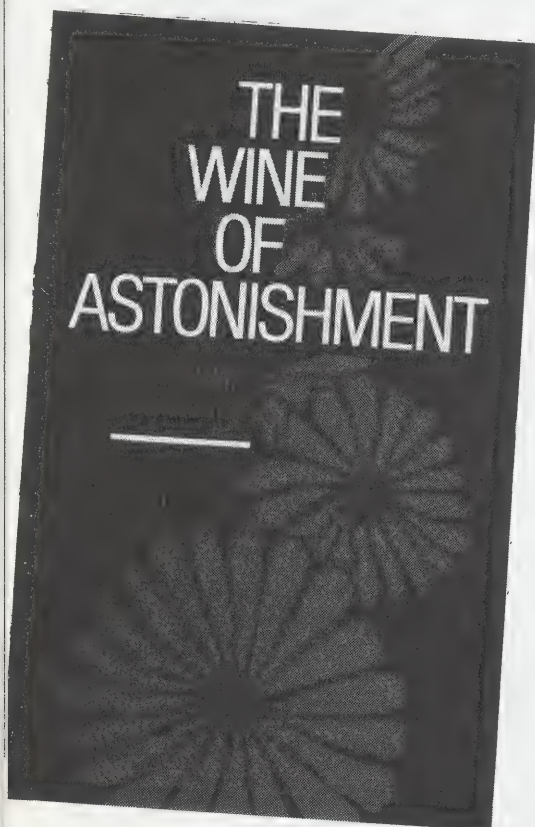
one love
one heart

Listen those of you who have ears to hear
Listen those of you who have ears to hear

© John Agard

Moving spirit

The Wine of Astonishment by Earl Lovelace. Published by Andre Deutsch. Price £6.50 hb
Reviewed by Jenny Green



'The Wine of Astonishment' is Earl Lovelace's fourth published novel. The story is narrated by Eva, a Spiritual Baptist, wife and mother, who records the changes and conflicts in the village of Bonasse, Trinidad, during and after the Second World War when the Baptist Church was illegal, when the 'Yankees' came and left, when people were given the vote and when the old ways of the village, stick-fighting, warriorhood, gave way to the new, education and scholarship:

"What was happening was that the warrior was dying The scholar, the boy with education was taking over."

Lovelace is writing from the people. There is no feeling of distance in the language of the narrator. We hear Eva's voice; the rhythms are not only the rhythms of the Trinidad dialect but also of the 'sermon' of the Baptists' themselves. She begins her story by saying:

"Is because we could bear it. Is because out of all the shoulders in the world our shoulders could bear more weight, and out of all

the flesh in the world, our flesh could hold more pain, and out of all the hearts in the world our heart could stomach more ache, without breaking or bursting than any shoulder or flesh or heart."

Yet despite this closeness in the language, there is a kind of distancing too. The characters are not characters we get to know intimately; they are types or symbols of the different forces at work in the society. Bolo, the 'Bad John', represents the people, the resistance hidden within the people to fight not only for their rights, freedom to worship and to vote, but against the corruption, exploitation and superficiality of the 'legitimate' society; the political machinery, the bureaucracy.

Bolo has three major conflicts, one with Prince, the policeman, who represents the law; one, more subtly with Ivan Morton, the schoolmaster come politician and thirdly with Bee, Eva's husband who represents other forces in the village. Bee has been trying to change things slowly through the 'legitimate' channels of reform. Bolo shows him the limitations of these qualities of endurance. Bolo directly challenges the villagers and particularly Bee who is the leader of the Baptist Church: eventually through his actual death, forces them to recognise their own strengths and possibilities; their spirit of resistance.

Although the spirit is lost within the church itself, it moves to the steel-band, a new symbol of resistance and selfhood that the people will carry with them into the future where they must deal with their own people. It is no longer that "the law is the whole empire of Britain", the law is now the Ivan Mortons of their own world.

Lovelace, therefore, deals not only with the importance of history and roots but with the importance of the present and the necessity for the challenge of modernity.

'The Wine of Astonishment' was in fact written before 'The Dragon Can't Dance' and in many ways links the progression of the novelist from 'The Schoolmaster' to 'The Dragon Can't Dance'. Like 'The Schoolmaster' it is a fable; characters are symbols of forces at work in Trinidad society. They are not as fully developed as those in 'The Dragon Can't Dance', yet the language is closer to that in 'The Dragon Can't Dance'. Here we see the radical nature of the themes projected through the vitality of the language; the voice of the people.

The Dragon Can't Dance: Andre Deutsch, 1979 (Paperback, Longman, 1981)
The Schoolmaster: Heinemann, 1979

Rubber bullets

They Shoot Children
Published by Information on Ireland
Price 50p Reviewed by Linton Kwesi Johnson.

On Friday, 16 April 1982, an eleven year old boy, Steven McConomy, was shot with a plastic bullet by British troops in the Bogside area of Londonderry, Northern Ireland. He died on the following Monday. According to eyewitness reports, he was shot from a range of about ten yards. Steven is the 14th victim of rubber and plastic bullets in Northern Ireland over the last decade. Half of those killed by these lethal weapons have been children.



KILLED

Julie Livingstone
aged 14, died 13 May
1981.

'They Shoot Children' is a very powerful and timely pamphlet publication. It documents, in a very effective and moving way, the history of the use of rubber and plastic bullets in Northern Ireland and further afield. It details the long list of deaths and serious injuries suffered by unarmed civilians in Northern Ireland at the hands of British troops. It also discusses the propaganda used by the British state to justify their continued use, and the 'lies and cover-ups' that have come in the wake of public outcry against these murders. The book also



LOST AN EYE

Patrick Callaghan
Patrick Callaghan, 21 years
old, was struck in the face
plastic bullet.

deals with the use of CS gas and water cannons.

Following last year's mass uprisings of young blacks in Britain, the British Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, a former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, has issued the British police with plastic bullets, CS gas and water cannons.

'They Shoot Children' illustrates, in graphic terms, exactly what the British state has in store for us on the mainland. The pamphlet is a tremendous indictment against the continued use of these murderous weapons against unarmed civilians. It should be read.

Sexual relations

You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down by Alice Walker. Published by the Women's Press. Price £2.50
Reviewed by C L R James

Beginning, Middle and End, that celebrated Aristotelian trio, can be as useful to the reviewer as it has been to philosophy. The Beginning is the reviewer himself, and in this connection what the reviewer brings to the task before him. In regard to Alice Walker I bring a great deal. Her previous novels, short stories and poetic lyrics stand very high on my list of contemporary writers, and her novel 'Meridian' is unsurpassed in its combination of detail, personal characters and events, and the expansion of these into a theory of social revolution today. That is my Beginning.

The Middle is the book itself. I confess that only here and there do I meet the Alice Walker whom I know, admire and respect. The reviewer, however, must deal first with what the writer aimed at. In these short stories Alice Walker seems to me to be aiming at an investigation into the sexual relations of the black middle class in the United States, between black man and black woman, and also those whites who are their associates.

Take this:

"A middle-aged husband comes home after a long day at the office. His wife greets him at the door with the news that dinner is ready. He is grateful. First, however, he must use the bathroom. In the bathroom, sitting on the commode, he opens up the 'Jiveboy' magazine he has brought home in his briefcase. There are a couple of jive-mates

poses that particularly arouse him. He studies the young women — blond perhaps (the national craze), with elastic waists and inviting eyes — strokes his penis. At the same time his bowels stir with the desire to defecate. He is in the bathroom a luxurious ten minutes. He emerges spent, relaxed — hungry for dinner."

His wife, using the bathroom later, comes upon the slightly damp magazine. She picks it up with mixed emotions. She is a brownskin woman with black hair and eyes. She looks at the white blondes and brunettes. Will he be thinking of them, she wonders, when he is making love to me?

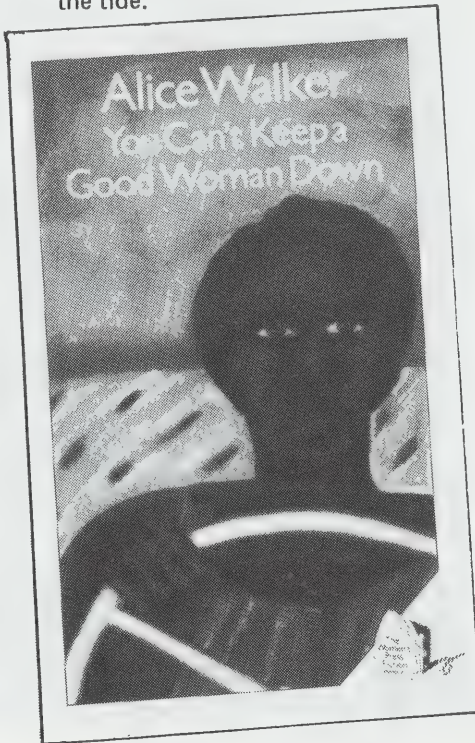
"Why do you need these?" She asks?

"They mean nothing" he says.

"But they hurt me somehow," she says.

"You are being a.) silly, b.) a prude, and c.) ridiculous," he says. "You know I love you."

She cannot say to him: But they are not me, those women. She cannot say she is jealous of pictures on a page. That she feels invisible. Rejected. Overlooked. She says instead, to herself: He is right. I will grow up. Adjust. Swim with the tide."



Too much of the book attempts to portray and draw conclusions from similar episodes.

Here is some more of the same: this man finds his sex-life affected by blonde girls in the popular magazine.

"For the first time he understands fully a line his wife read the day before: 'The pornography industry's exploitation of the black woman's

body is *qualitatively* different from that of the white woman, . . .

. . . He begins to feel sick. For he realises that he has bought some if not all of the advertisements about himself. In pornography the black man is portrayed as being capable of fucking anything . . . even a piece of shit. He is defined solely by the size, readiness and unselectivity of his cock.

Still, he does not know how to make love without the fantasies fed to him by the movies and magazines. Those movies and magazines (whose characters' pursuits are irrelevant or antithetical to his concerns) that have insinuated themselves between him and his wife, so that the totality of her body, her entire corporeal reality is alien to him. Even to clutch her in lust is automatically to shut his eyes. Shut his eyes, and . . . he chuckles bitterly. . . dream of England."

For years he has been fucking himself.

I am trying to find out what I always seek, what the writer is aiming at, what the writer is trying to portray.

Then, in one of the last stories of the book, a black girl who tells the story writes the following about the sex lives of herself and her white girlfriend.

"We would continue to have an 'international list' of lovers whose amorous talents or lack of talents we would continue (giggling into our dotage) to compare. Our friendship would survive everything, be truer than everything, endure even our respective marriages, children, husbands — assuming we *did*, out of desperation and boredom someday, marry, which did not seem a probability, exactly, but more in the area of an amusing idea."

That is on page 95 of a book of 167 pages. The rest of the book is not in anyway different.

And now for Conclusion. Alice Walker is obviously tackling seriously the sexual life of certain types of black people and their white friends and associates. She does not interest me in what she says, nor in her description of the events and still less in the conclusions that she draws. Maybe, in certain circles in the United States, the clarification of what is an undoubted problem is being sought. In any case I don't believe that this

kind of investigation and speculation will do very much to help. So far as I understand, in literary creation, you have to create people whose lives become so involved in their experiences and needs that they become vitally affected by them. The only person seriously affected by Alice Walker here is myself. I am left in disappointment and too often with a feeling of revolt against what I was reading.

C L R James will review Alice Walker's 'Meridian' in the next issue of 'Race Today'.

Women Producers

Women on the Line
by Ruth Cavendish, Published by
Routledge & Kegan Paul
price £5.95
Reviewed by Deirdre Parminder

Ruth Cavendish, a white teacher who had been active in the women's movement and left politics, decided to work in a factory to seek out the relevance of her feminist and socialist politics to working class women, and to learn from their experiences and struggles. 'Women on the Line' is her account of the seven months she spent working on the assembly line in a car components firm. Publication of this book was delayed by legal problems; Britain's libel laws ensured that the factory remained anonymous.

The book describes, in great detail, life inside the factory, the various jobs on the line where Ruth worked, the speed and pressure of work, the way the Caribbean, Asian and Irish women working on the line saw each other, the everyday struggles over timing and a dispute. Particularly useful is the description of the complex racial and sexual hierarchy by which control is maintained. Most of the women Ruth worked with were black or Irish, for English-born women in the area had the option of office jobs. And within the factory, "from where we were on the line, anyone with skill or training was a man, anyone in authority was a man, and any man had authority."

This book comes alive in the descriptions of the lives and viewpoints of the women with whom Ruth worked, all of them fighting to survive as women, and as black or Irish people. As is argued, the reason that working class women have not been attracted

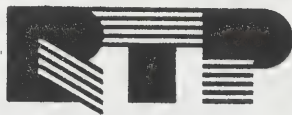


to the women's movement is not because they are not feminist, or are unaware. Ruth sees the women's movement as primarily a movement of middle class women, agitating for changes that will benefit working class women but without their active participation. The lives of working class women are different from the lives of middle class women and their forms of struggle different.

The book of necessity concentrates

on the factory, and this leads to a playing down of the ways in which women's lives are conditioned by childcare and housework and their roles as wives and mothers. But this book is well worth reading and is a must for anyone who is politically active and has never worked in a factory themselves. It is a very valuable attempt to draw theory from people's experiences, rather than imposing abstract theory from above.

RACE TODAY PUBLICATIONS



Inglan is a Bitch by Linton Kwesi Johnson (2nd Edition)
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The Road Make to Walk on Carnival Day by Darcus Howe
A Collection of articles on Carnival in Notting Hill, from 1974 to 1977. This Collection documents the key moments in the struggles to keep the West Indian Carnival on the streets of Notting Hill.
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New Perspectives on the Asian Struggle in Britain by Farrukh Dhondy
Historical analysis of Asian strikes between 1959 – 1979 together with interviews with the Asian participants in that strike movement.

Black Explosion in British Schools by Farrukh Dhondy, Barbara Beese and Leila Hassan

Three members of the Race Today Collective identify the revolt of black students and parents as one of the major agencies for radical change in the schooling system.

Voices of the Living and the Dead by Linton Kwesi Johnson
Some of Linton's earlier writings. First published in 1974 by Race Today and long out of print.

From Bobby to Babylon: Blacks and the British Police by Darcus Howe

An analysis of 25 years of struggles waged by the West Indian community against the excessive use of police power against them.

80th Birthday Lectures by C L R James

James celebrated his 80th birthday in three public lectures organised by the Race Today Collective.

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Race Today

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VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1982

PRICE 70p

**REFLECTING ON THE TRIAL
OF THE DECADE**

THE BRADFORD TWELVE



EDITORIAL Building Th

In the last 18 months the black community posed three major questions to the rulers of this society. The first was quite specific. What caused the fire which destroyed the lives of 13 young blacks at 439, New Cross Road on 18 January 1982? The question was not politely posed, nor was it raised in the formal and discreet lobbying of parliamentarians. Some 15,000 blacks marched across London in order that our concerns and genuine fears be brought before the whole society. Police investigations, the coroner's inquest into the cause of the deaths and finally judicial proceedings before the High Court failed to provide any satisfactory answers. More than that, all these investigative and judicial activities were replete with chicanery, vacillation, incompetence and coarse political manoeuvre. To date the parents and relatives of the dead and the black community are no wiser.

The second issue was raised with equal dynamism and vigour. What is to be done about the British police who have for 25 years trampled wildly over the rights of the black community? For

several weeks last summer, thousands of young blacks firebombed their way into the headlines as they attacked and fought the police in every major city in England. Our rulers called Lord Scarman to enquire. His report was lame as it was tame. Even so, the authorities have vacillated over every single one of his recommendations. One year later, no one could identify any fundamental attempt on the part of the authorities to respond to the genuine grievances of the black community on this score. Again, vacillation punctuated by crude violence characterises the state's response.

Thirdly, implicit in the uprising of last summer is the question, what is to be done about the plight of young blacks? An entire generation has been consigned to wagelessness and social misery. While government ministers lie and cheat about the impending economic upturn, this vibrant social force, stimulated by all the material gloss of modern society, are offered police and more police. Thousands of black youth have grown into their teens aware of no other social force but the Special Patrol Group,

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Published by: Race Today Collective

Letters

Dear Race Today,

It is always a *privilege* to be criticised by 'Race Today', one does not quarrel too easily with your commitment and your political perception is always *educative* — but, to put me in the same laundry-basket as Berry Bryan is, I feel, a little bit cruel. . . to the laundry-basket, if to no one else!

Truth is, it was a desperate gamble which did not come off; you win some, you lose some.

Always with highest regards,

Rudy Narayan

Temple, London EC4

Dear Race Today,

I would like to correct the impression given in your column "On the Campaign Trail" in the May issue about Filipino workers.

The implication is that the Migrant Action Group both fought and won the cases of those Filipino workers who were threatened with removal from the UK.

The fact is that the GMWU, together with NUPE, TGWU and COHSE and the Migrant Action Group fought the cam-

paign. As the majority of threatened workers were and are GMWU members, this union could and should have done no other.

The point is worth stressing, not to denigrate the fine work done by the Migrant Action Group, nor to ignore the plight of those still "unreprieved" but to highlight the fact that major unions do see fighting the injustices of immigration legislation as a normal part of their daily duty to members.

Yours faithfully,

Pat Turner

Equal Rights Officer

General and Municipal Workers' Union

Esher, Surrey

Dear Race Today,

Having reviewed Alice Walker myself (New Society, 18 March), I have some reactions to CLR James' review, 'Race Today' May/June issue, of her book of short stories, 'You Can't Keep A Good Woman Down.' I was inspired to read her by CLR James himself, after hearing him talk at the Riverside studios last year. It's a painful realisation, then, that the Alice Walker he 'knows, admires and respects' is the one who conforms most closely to his notion of a social

Mass Movement

the Vice Squad, the Regional Crime Squad and now the riot police.

Police apart, thousands are now dragooned into the meaningless and sterile work experience of the Manpower Services Commission. Leading economists have identified this mass unemployment as permanent. They tell us that modern technology applied to production means less labour and more advanced machinery and this trend is now evident in several industries. To young blacks this government has offered no policy for incorporating their energies and creative capacities into the development of British society.

The situation assumes greater complexity with the sterile bankruptcy of the other parliamentary parties. Where do we go from here? Or perhaps where do we begin? We begin as we must with the mass of ordinary working people. We hold to the view that only a mass movement, sweeping all before it, can attempt to resolve these issues.

And such a movement is on the agenda in the Britain of today. The evidence is there for all to

see. Blacks are in complete revolt and everyone is aware of it, as they are aware of the fact that at any moment the slightest incident could trigger off an explosion which would bring the army on to the streets of England. The Irish continue, without respite, the armed struggle against the British army. Voices within the white working class call for a political strike to bring the government down, though not stating what will take its place. And these voices are not without significant support in the population. Then there is the militant opposition among health workers, stirrings among the miners, water workers and other proletarians.

Therein resides the beginnings of a mass movement in Britain. At this stage it is the responsibility of political militants to assist in strengthening that movement, assist in developing it to new and more powerful stages. We in Race Today are dedicated to that task.

Race Today Collective
August/September 1982

revolutionary, that is, someone who deals with 'wider' political issues. He confesses that, when it comes to an examination of the relation between racism and sexism, of the oppression of black women by black men, and the tortured relationship between black and white women, "she does not interest me in what she says". CLR James is here expressing the classic refusal of the male revolutionary thinker to give credence to female experience and what women have to say about it. He has allowed his "disappointment and 'feeling of revolt'" to seriously mislead him — and us — by suggesting that the stories deal exclusively with sex — the sexual relations of the black middle class in the US and their white associates.

The two stories he quotes are remarkable for their honesty in dealing with difficult issues, and for the clarity of the class issue. The man in *Coming Apart* is middle class; the woman remains 'still black', while he is 'something else'. Women are an oppressed class regardless of their colour or the status of the man they're attached to. This Alice Walker shows and this women will respond to. CLR James' failure to do so is not unusual; many men on the left are still reluctant to face it. But it

means perhaps that he was the wrong person to review the book. Sex is only *one* of the themes. Alice Walker treats of. Other stories look at the way black American music has been co-opted by white superstars, the position of writers in the black community, the inversion of power relations through vengeance, the disillusion of American women since the 60's with male revolutionary rhetoric. Indeed, I entirely refute his claim that 'This kind of investigation and speculation will not do very much to help'. Help who? It's helped me immensely as a British feminist to confront issues that haven't yet been so coherently articulated here, but undoubtedly will be before much longer. Yours sincerely,

Jane Bryce
Tilson Gardens
London SW2

Dear Race Today,
There is nothing new about police brutality, or excessive use of force on arrest, but knowing this and witnessing it are qualitatively different matters.

On Friday 11th June, 1982 we witnessed the arrest of a man and a woman, (both black) who had allegedly burgled a house in

the white middle class end of Emmanuel Road, Streatham. The male in case was manhandled into a car, and subsequently punched by one policeman. The female, however, received more concentrated attention. After being thrown onto the floor of a van, she was severely beaten, kicked, had her hair pulled etc. At least four policemen and one policewoman participated in this brutality. Her screams were bloodcurdling, providing a piercing touch of melodrama to a free piece of distasteful street theatre. The police smirked with self satisfaction as they battered her, and entertained the crowd assembled on the pavement. Needless to say the spectacle was nauseating.

However, the point of this tale is not to provide you with more of what you know: it is to bring into question the attitude of the Brixton Law Centre. At 5 o'clock we rang Hubert James to report the arrest, and the excessive use of force. We wanted to offer ourselves as witnesses against the police should the necessity arise. We were met with a Catch 22: it is not possible to track down those arrested unless you know their names. Having reached this impasse, we offered the details above. H. James refused to re-

cord them on the grounds that the exercise would be time wasting. He argued this point of principle for longer than it would have taken to jot down some notes.

Which surprises you more; this, or the police?

Julia Athwater
Pennie Fairbairn
Balham
London SW12

Photo credits:

Cover	Claudius Hilliman
P. 120	John Sturrock: Report
P. 125	John Sturrock: Report
P. 127	Top: Claudius Hilliman Bottom: Roger Andersen
P. 128	Roger Andersen
P. 130	Top: Claudius Hilliman Bottom: Roger Andersen
P. 132	Claudius Hilliman
P. 139	Photos courtesy of Island Records

NEWS BACKGROUND

New Cross Massacre Massive Police and Legal Cover Up

On July 8, 1982, Lord Chief Justice Lane, Lord Justice Watkins and Mr Justice Robert Goff refused to quash the open verdict given by the jury at the inquest on the New Cross Fire in April/May 1981. They also refused to grant a new Inquest. The New Cross Massacre took place on January 18, 1981 at 439 New Cross Road, London SE14. 13 young black people died and 27 were injured.

The parents and widow of the dead stated in their legal action challenging the inquest verdict:

- That given that forensic evidence pointed to the fire being deliberately caused the Coroner misdirected the jury as to the facts, and verdicts open to them.
- The Coroner adopted the theory of the fight as causing the fire against all other possible theories of the fire.

- The Coroner failed to keep written notes of the proceedings as required by Rule 30 of the Coroner's Rules 1953.

- The Coroner did not sum up properly, he read from witness statements taken by the police.

- In summing up the Coroner omitted matters said in evidence while including other things which witnesses had not said when they gave their evidence.

The parents and their legal representatives were dissatisfied with the Inquest even before it ended. They had gone before Mr Justice Comyn at the High Court seeking an injunction to stop the Inquest. When he heard of the failure of the Coroner, Dr Arthur Gordon Davies to take notes he expressed the view that this was a grave irregularity, and if the parents were dissatisfied with the verdict

they should return to him.

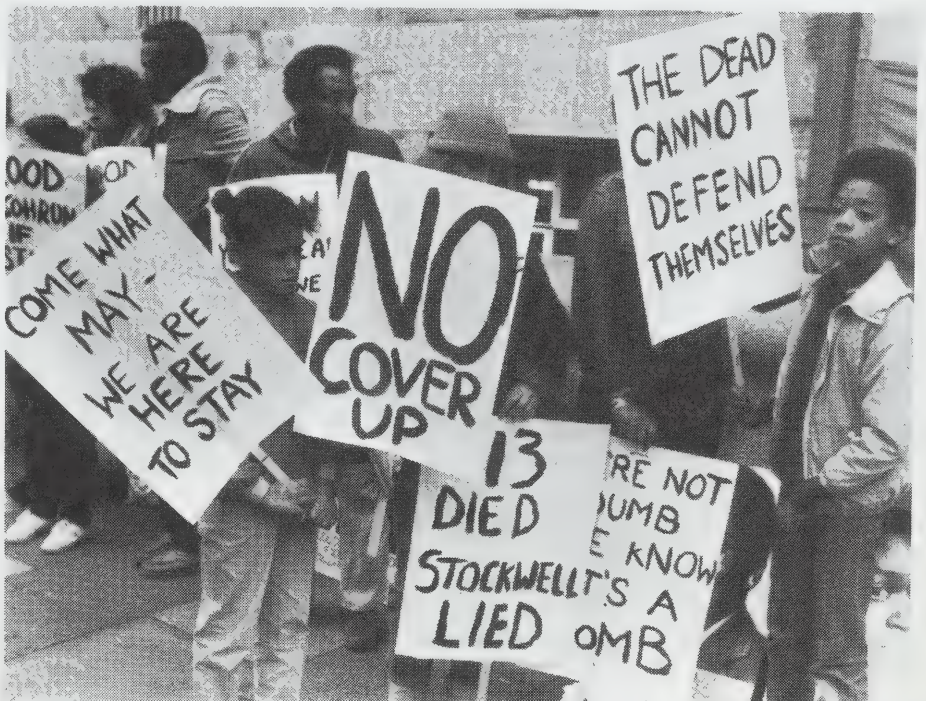
After the Inquest the parents decided to appeal against the Open Verdict.

The Attorney General, Sir Michael Havers, gave his backing to the parents Appeal to quash the verdict and their application for a new inquest.

When the parents returned to Justice Comyn for leave to appeal he granted their application but questioned whether a new Inquest would not open old wounds.

The parents immediately wrote to the Lord Chancellor making it clear that they wanted a new Inquest and that the old wounds would continue to fester until they were granted one.

They also drew the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the fact that the Coroner had allowed the police to tape the proceedings without their knowledge or any consultation with them or



their legal representatives.

The Appeal 5 — 8 July, 1982

The judges refused to accept any single point made by the families. They systematically put the lid on any legal come back. In a most brutal judgement they exonerated the Coroner, they even said he acted commendably. This shows the extent to which the authorities are prepared to go to cover up the massacre at 439 New Cross Road.

Lord Justice Lane, Lord Justice Watkins and Mr Justice Goff ruled that any irregularities or errors in the Coroner's behaviour were not serious enough to merit the quashing of the Inquest verdict and further stated that given the hostility of the families and their supporters at the Inquest it was surprising that he did not make more mistakes. They

launched an attack on the parents lawyers (Michael Mansfield, Ian MacDonald and Rock Tansey) for not assisting the Coroner in the conduct of his biased inquest.

The police led by Commander Stockwell, the media, and the Coroner had tried to convince everybody before and during the Inquest that the fire was caused by a fight between black youths in the front room of 439 New Cross Road. Now, at the Appeal. Lord Justice Lane described the fight theory as 'irrelevant' and the Coroner's QC Henry Brooks called it 'a wicked shame'. So having dismissed the main thrust of the Inquest put forward by the police over 13 days, the judges nevertheless found the Inquest satisfactory.

The Coroner's conduct of the inquest from April 21, to May 13, 1981, was

universally condemned as biased and incompetent.

The judgement of the Court of Appeal endorses the police cover up and corruption which has now gone on for 18 months.

It is the police and Coroner who chose the witnesses at the Inquest. The police took over 1,000 statements. They picked 65 witnesses to suit their own theory. There were other witnesses who could have been called and who would have assisted a genuinely conducted Inquest aimed at finding the truth. The Inquest was to be their political reply to the mass mobilisation of the black community and the New Cross Massacre Action Committee's Black Peoples Day of Action on March 2, 1981.

Commander Stockwell then leading the investigation in May 1981 said that

New Cross Massacre Massive Police and Legal Cover Up The Parents, Relatives and New Cross Massacre Action Committee Fight On

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- The Coroner did not sum up properly, he read out witness statements taken by the police from witnesses who were not called.
- In summing up the Coroner omitted other things which witnesses had not said when they gave their evidence.

The parents and their legal representatives were dissatisfied with the Inquest verdict and ended the High Court seeking an injunction to stop the Inquest. When he heard of the failure of the Coroner, Mr Arthur Gordon Havers to take notes he expressed the view that this was a grave irregularity and if the parents were dissatisfied with the verdict they should return to him.

After the Inquest the parents decided to appeal against the Open Verdict.

The Attorney General, Sir Michael Havers, gave his backing to the parents' Appeal to quash the verdict and this application for a new inquest was granted. When the parents returned to Justice Goff to leave to appeal he granted their application but

questioned whether a new Inquest would not open old wounds.

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THE APPEAL 5th - 8th JULY, 1982
The judges refused to accept any single point made by the families. They systematically put the lid on the Coroner's behaviour and the hostility of the families by legal means. The Coroner, they even said he acted commendably. This shows the extent to which the authorities are prepared to go to cover up the massacre at 439 New Cross Road.

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Commemorative Meeting of the New Cross Massacre 18th January 1981-18th January 1982 FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW CROSS MASSACRE

Public Meeting on Monday January 18, 1982 at Deptford Town Hall, New Cross Road, London SE14 at 7.30pm

Let us forget the tragic event which struck terror in the hearts of black people when 13 youngsters, cut down like so many reeds of corn.

THE POLICE
At the time of the Coroner's inquest in May 1981, the police stated that their enquiries were incomplete. The open verdict, one would assume, was a mandate for further enquiries. What have they done since May?

THE APPEAL
The relatives and friends of the dead are still awaiting word from the Court of Appeal as to whether or not they are to be given leave to appeal. Why is it taking so long?

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
The Massacre Action Committee is busy organising a Commission of National and International person alities to carry out an independent inquiry. The Commission will sit later this year.

Hosted by the New Cross Massacre Action Committee 74, Shallop Road, SE24
Designed by RT Studios

Memorial Service at St Paul's Church Deptford SE8 at 3pm on Sunday January 17, 1982. Players at 439 New Cross Road afterwards.

he had 50 policemen at his disposal since January 20, 1981 and had spent £320,000 of tax payers money up to the Inquest. At the Inquest Stockwell said he had 20 other people to interview. Since the Inquest the Inquiry came under Commander Phelan and Det. Supt. Bell they have come up with nothing, 'no new fresh evidence'.

At the end of the day the parents have nothing from the police, nothing from the Coroner's Inquest and nothing from the Judges in the High Court — it is the most massive police and legal cover up.

The New Cross Massacre Action Committee, together with the relatives of

the 13 dead young people do not intend to let this matter rest. We do not intend to forget that in addition to the 13 dead, 27 young blacks suffered serious injuries. The judges ruling has not weakened our resolve nor the resolve of the parents and relatives. It has confirmed the extent to which the people who hold power in this country will go to cover up the New Cross Massacre.

The parents and the New Cross Massacre Action Committee said on May 13, 1981 the day of the Inquest verdict, that they rejected the open verdict of the Inquest and would hold an International Commission of Inquiry into the New Cross Massacre. This is the

next step. Commissioners from Africa, Caribbean, India, USA, Europe, and Britain have already confirmed their willingness to participate in such a Commission. We call on all organisations and individuals who feel outraged at the decision of the High Court on the Appeal to continue to support the New Cross parents, their relatives and the New Cross Massacre Action Committee. For further information contact the New Cross Massacre Action Committee at 165 Railton Road, London SE24 OLU Tel: 01-737 2268. Send donations which are needed for the work of The Committee and the International Commission of Inquiry.

Newton Rose Victory



On Thursday, 1 July 1982 five Law Lords unanimously threw out the prosecution's appeal against the Lord Chief Justice's decision, in the Appeal Court, that Newton Rose's murder conviction must be quashed. The House of Lords hearing had taken place on Monday, 14 June before the five Law Lords, Diplock, Scarman, Roskill, Bridge and Brandon. These five crafty political operators were forced to accept that the appeal, lodged by the prosecution barrister Ann Curnow, had no basis in law. The Newton Rose Action Committee had always stated that the appeal was a vicious and cynical move by the police and their legal allies to prolong the agony of Newton Rose and his family. The police also needed to hit back after the massive defeat they suffered when Newton Rose was freed by the appeal court in March.

But the Newton Rose Action Committee was not inactive during the weeks leading up to the June 14 Lords hearing. Public meetings were held in Stoke Newington, Finsbury Park, Brix-

ton, and Hackney. Other meetings took place in Leicester and Milton Keynes. Also, thousands of copies of a campaign booklet entitled "Newton Rose Framed For Murder — Police Must Not Get Away With It," were printed and distributed. On Sunday, 13 June a poetry evening and rally for campaign supporters was held at Chat's Palace in Homerton, East London. Dub poets, Linton Kwesi Johnson and Michael Smith donated their talents to this powerful and exciting event which was attended by 200 people. The following day, Monday, 14 June, while the police's barrister Ann Curnow was making a fool of herself in the House of Lords with her bogus appeal, a 50-strong two hour picket was held outside Hackney police station where the original fit-up of Newton Rose and his three friends took place. A senior police officer tried several times to stop the picket but was foiled by the discipline and firmness of the picketers.

The Newton Rose Action Committee has achieved its principal aim of

freeing Newton, Ian Henry, Michael Clarke and Orville Johnson. But the Rose family, their friends, and the multitude of campaign supporters in and around Hackney still want to know the answers to a number of questions including:—

1. Why were Newton and his friends framed for murder?
2. Why have the Hackney police been so reluctant to prosecute the 'real' murderers of Anthony Donnelly?
3. What has been the precise nature of the relationship between the National Front Constitution Movement and Inspector Goodall?
4. Why did the Stoke Newington police, including at least one self-confessed friend of Inspector Goodall, victimise Newton Rose by arresting him five days before his House of Lords appearance, charging him with Grievous Bodily Harm and opposing bail, for an incident which they alleged had taken place five weeks previously.



ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL.

BY PAT DICK

Kenya

A new wave of repression has begun in Kenya. The regime has been arresting defence lawyers, peasants, journalists and university lecturers. The new wave of arrests and detentions started in May 1982 and have continued into June and July. Seven people have been detained without trial, five others face court cases on trumped up charges relating to 'seditious' publications. Those detained are: former MP George Anyona, lawyer John Khaminwa, former Deputy Director of Intelligence, Stephen Muriithi, Kamojo Wachira, lecturer Kenyatta University College (KUC), Edward Oyugi, Educational Psychology lecturer at KUC, Al Amin Mazrui, Linguistics lecturer at KUC and Mukaru Ngang'a, history lecturer at the University of Nairobi. Those awaiting trial for 'seditious' literature are: Maina Kinyatti, Department of History (KUC), Willy Mutunga, Department of law, University of Nairobi, Crispus Ng'ang'a Khiga, Ernest Ndirangu Kamau and Wang'ondou Kariuki.

A committee for the Release of Political Prisoners in Kenya is campaigning against the current wave of arrests, detentions and trials now taking place and for the release of the political prisoners.

Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners in Kenya, c/o 76 Stroud Green Road, London N4 3EN. Tel: 01 272 4889.

South African Executions

Anthony Tsotsobe (26) Johannes Shabangu (27) and David Moise (26), three South Africans, were sentenced to death for high treason on 19 August 1981. The three faced charges of high treason, terrorism, attempted murder and robbery. All were charged with

membership of the ANC, undergoing military training in Angola, possessing and using explosives and carrying out armed attacks on buildings. They are currently imprisoned in Pretoria awaiting execution. The men's appeal is to be heard by the Appellate Division of the South African Supreme Court on 3 September 1982.

Support the campaign to stop the executions:

Write to the Foreign Secretary urging him to take all appropriate and urgent measures to stop the executions.

Protest to the South African Ambassador, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, SW1.

Raise this issue urgently in any organisation of which you are a member to secure their support. Campaign information from SATIS c/o Charlotte Street, London W1 Tel: 01 580 5311

El Salvador Campaign

The El Salvador Campaign are asking those who support their work to urgently affiliate to the campaigns. To produce and mail their News Bulletins and other information is costly and would be assisted by affiliation fees. Rates are £5 for individuals, £2 for unemployed and £10 for organisations.

El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, 29 Islington Park Street, London N1. Tel: 01 359 2270.

Kingsdale

On Friday 19 March, Tony Francis, Gladstone Williams, Keith Campbell and Frank Rollock were arrested as they left the site of Kingsdale School.

Tony was charged with obstructing the police; Gladstone with obstructing the highway; Frank and Keith with threatening behaviour. Their cases were heard at Lambeth Magistrates court in May. The case against Keith Campbell was dismissed and the other three were found guilty.

Tony Francis, Gladstone Williams and Frank Rollocks are

now appealing against these convictions. The Appeal will be heard at Knightsbridge Crown Court on 6 October. For further information contact: Mr F Rollocks (Snr) Tenants Hall, Buckmaster House, Stockwell Park Estate, Brixton. Tel: 01 737 0990.

Phil Robbins Campaign

A committee has been formed to free Phil Robbins. Phil is a black footballer who was shot twice by police using Ferret CS gas shells, during the riots in Toxteth in July 1981. He brought a civil action for compensation against the police and was subsequently charged and convicted on two counts of burglary.

The committee insists that Phil is innocent of both charges, that he was framed by the police in an effort to force him to withdraw his claim for compensation for his injuries and demand his immediate release. Contact Phil Robbins Campaign, PO Box 52, Liverpool L69 8AT.

Thornton Heath

The Black Peoples Action Committee has launched a campaign to free the 10 youths convicted after the death of Terry May. The committee is calling for help and support from the black community to fight for the freedom of the youths and to mobilise against the police. Appeals have been lodged on behalf of three of the youths.

Contact: Black Peoples Action Committee, Wellesley Road West Croydon. Tel: 01 686 7264.

No Deportations

Najat Chafee, a 22 year old Moroccan woman, is facing deportation following the deportation of her husband Hassan Ghilan. Najat came to England after her marriage to Hassan who had been living here for 10 years. She subsequently

had a son, Mohssim, who is now two.

The Home Office deported Najat's husband and he left the country in October 1981. At the time of his deportation, Najat and her son were living in a women's refuge apart from her husband because of his consistent violence to her. The marriage had broken down. The current immigration rules do not recognise Najat's right to live here independent of her husband. She is one of many black women who face deportation because of these rules.

Contact Friends of Najat Chafee, 138 Minet Avenue, London NW10. Tel: 01 965 3324.

Kantilal Mistry is a citizen of India. He met and married Chanchilben when visiting relatives in Britain in 1979. Sheetal, their daughter, was born in 1981. The immigration rules state that foreign men who marry British women can only settle here if the woman or one of her parents were born in the UK. Mrs Mistry was born in Kenya, and has always held a British passport. She came to the UK 10 years ago, but because she was not born here the family is likely to be separated. Kantilal will be forced to return to India and leave his wife and daughter who are entitled to live here unless he wins his appeal against the decision to deport him.

Show your support for the family.

Protest to the Home Office. Write to William Whitelaw c/o The Home Office, Lunar House, Wellesley Road, Croydon.

Lobby your MP at the House of Commons.

Inform your Trade Union/Local church.

Donate to the cost of the campaign.

Donations and further information. Tameside Immigration Campaigns Support Group, 35A Manchester Road, Denton, Manchester M34 3JU. Tel: 061 336 3359.



Without Malice

Mugged by Frontline

The editor of the black nationalist journal, 'Frontline', is a very careless man. Boldly, he informed his readership of Darcus Howe's position on mugging. "Darcus Howe. . . wrote a report in Race Today characterising the behaviour of black youths in terms of mugging as being a revolutionary act. . .?" Hot and sensational stuff, but alas not true. The editor seems unable to distinguish between a report and an editorial. Even so, he need only have consulted the Race Today editorial, February 1975. Here goes: "We [in Race Today] are uncompromisingly against mugging. We see the mugging activity as a manifestation of powerlessness, a consequence of being without a wage". Couldn't be clearer than that!

Insp. Eist and St Peter

There once lived a Chief Inspector Eist whose mortal existence was spent largely with the Metropolitan Police. Upon his demise, he glided through the Pearly Gates with fine recommendations. He had protected life and property on earth from unscrupulous villains. and for

this he was duly rewarded with the job of protecting the Master's chamber. Information has reached this column that his job, together with his tenure as a citizen in Paradise, are in serious jeopardy. Eist, St Peter has been reliably informed, was once called out here on earth to investigate the Bank of America robbery. Upon arrival at the scene, he hastily collected valuables scattered around and made his way back to the police station. There he held an auction, and among the bidders were key fences in London including unscrupulous villains. One of them has since been convicted of murder. Eist appears before the Heavenly Tribunal in a few days. Meanwhile, the fires of hell await him.

Join the Met

Word has reached us that the public relations boys at Scotland Yard are busily engaged in rewording advertisements for recruits. This new project is very much influenced by the murky revelations of corruption in the Metropolitan Police.

'Join The Met And Make A Fortune' is one suggestion we have overheard. 'One Good Rob-

bery And You Are Made For Life', is another. '£10,000 For A Bail Application and £50,000 For Tampering With Evidence. The Choice Is Yours'. 'You Can Rise To Be A Commander If You Are Greedy Enough'. 'Join The Met, It's Bullion Time'. And there are many more. We offer a free copy of Linton Kwesi Johnson's 'Inglan is a Bitch' for the best slogan. We will pass on suggestions to the appropriate quarter.

Libel on our Doorstep

Opening shots have been fired by Berry Bryan, a barrister-at-law, who has taken objection to our reference to him in the article, 'Thornton Heath, the debacle', published in the May/June issue of Race Today. He has demanded compensation (we expect he means money) and an apology. The former is scarce even non-existent and the latter may, just may be harder to come by. Meanwhile we have taken objection to his solicitors, Singh Kharran & Co, getting involved. They represented one of the defendants in the Thornton Heath debacle and likely to be called as witnesses in the libel

action. We await thier response.

For Whom the Bell Tolls

Our attention has been drawn to the vigorous, investigative activities of Chief Superintendent Bell and his men. They form what is left of the squad investigating the New Cross fire. Recently, an officer hot footed it round to the home of the parents of one of the children who died in the fire. He was pursuing an important and exciting clue. A suspect was at hand. He flashed a photograph from the South London Press. It was a picture of a middle aged, black woman taken outside the High Court following the Appeal against the inquest. "Who is she?" he enquired anxiously, his powers of detection at full stretch. It turned out that the suspect was a close friend of the parent and the family. No doubt that identification saved her from days at Catford Police Station, where she would have been forcibly invited to sign copious statements describing a fight in the front room of 439 New Cross Road.

Tic Tac Toe



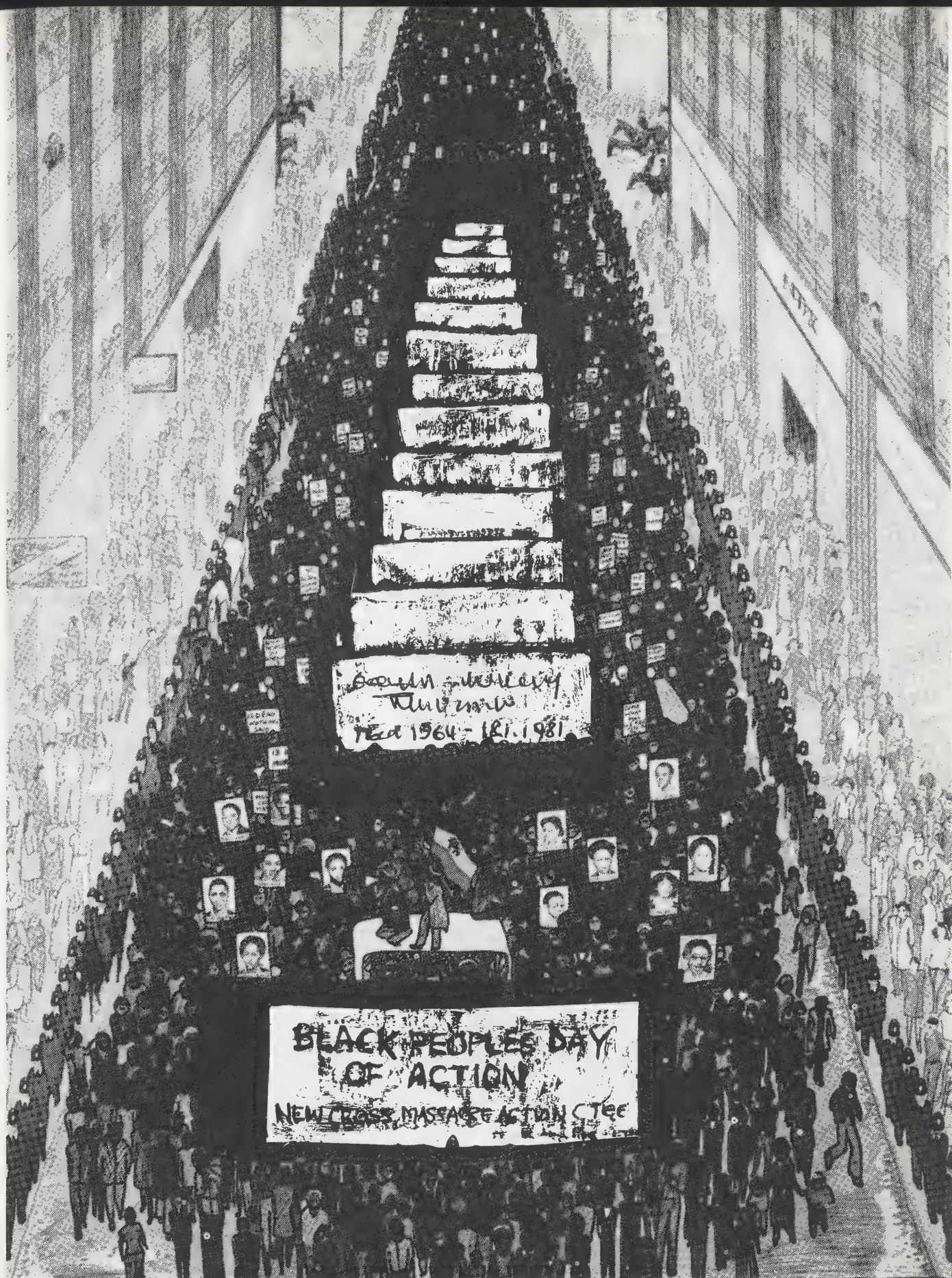
OUT NOW

The Black Explosion in British Schools by Farrukh Dhondy, Barbara Beese and Leila Hassan

This pamphlet identifies the revolt of black students and parents as one of the major agencies for radical change in the schooling system

Price £1.75p P&P 25p.

Available from Race Today Publications
165 Railton Road, London SE24 OLU



Based on an original art work by C. Abuk depicting the New Cross Massacre Black Peoples of Day of Action, 2nd March 1981
 Posters £1.50. Postcards 20p. Available from Committee, 165 Raitlon Road, SE24 OLU or Community Bookshops.

FIRST STEPS

LONDON, 2ND MARCH 1981

New Cross Massacre Action Committee presents

FIRST STEPS

REFLECTING ON THE TRIAL OF THE DECADE

The Bradford Twelve

12 young Asians were found not guilty of conspiracy to manufacture petrol bombs in Bradford. Claudius Hilliman, Stafford Howe, Pat Dick, Leila Hassan, Lorine Stapleton and Darcus Howe reflect on the trial of the decade
Additional research by Natasha Sivanandan

On July 17 1981, the attention of the West Yorkshire police was drawn to two milk crates of petrol bombs which were hidden in high bushes at the back of the nurses' home in Bradford. The police removed the petrol from the bottles, replaced it with tea and set up a vigil for the manufacturers. No one turned up. Thirteen days later, 12 young Asians from the Asian community in Bradford were arrested and subsequently charged with the following:

Count 1: Making an explosive substance with intent to endanger life and property contrary to Section 3(1)(b) of the Explosive Substance Act 1881. That on the 11th day of July 1981 (the 12) unlawfully and maliciously made an explosive substance, namely 38 petrol bombs, with intent by means thereof to endanger life or cause serious injury to property or to enable other persons to do so.

Count 2: Conspiracy to make explosive substances, contrary to Section 1 of the Criminal Law Act 1977. On the 11th day of July 1981 (the 12) conspired together to make explosive substances, namely petrol bombs, for unlawful purposes.

These charges were returned by the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions upon examination of evidence provided by the West Yorkshire police. They carry a penalty of up to life imprisonment, and legal pundits forecasted prison terms of seven to ten years should the defendants be found guilty.

The 12 appeared before the local magistrates on Saturday, August 1st and were refused bail. The defendants spent the next three to four months in prison before they were granted bail on conditions which included large sureties, daily reporting to the local police, an

BRADFORD 12....



GAGGED



evening curfew and a complete ban on attendance at all political meetings, later relaxed to a ban on those meetings which related directly to their cases.

Giovanni Singh, Praveen Patel, Saeed Hussain, Sabir Hussain, Tariq Ali, Ahmed Mansoor, Bahram Noor Khan, Tarlochan Gata Aura, Ishaq Mohammed Kazi, Vasant Patel, Jayesh Amin and Masood Malik appeared at the Leeds Crown Court on April 26 1982. They were all represented by counsel with the exception of Tariq Ali who chose to defend himself.

The trial lasted 31 days before Judge Beaumont and a jury of seven whites

and five blacks. All the jurors were local Leeds residents.

The main line of defence was self-defence. Gata Aura, Singh, Patel, Hussain, Mansoor, Malik, Sabir Hussain, Khan and Vasant Patel admitted to being involved somewhere along the line. Ali, Amin and Kazi denied any involvement at all. Ali claimed that he was told by Gata Aura about the existence of the petrol bombs and he advised Gata Aura to destroy them. Amin's counsel cross examined on the basis that his client knew nothing about the operation and was playing cricket at the time. Kazi denied any involvement at all.

Those who accepted that they were involved advanced the line that they were legally and morally right to manufacture the petrol bombs. They had heard that racials were on their way to attack the Bradford Asian community, and after a meeting at Amin's house, they took the decision to make and use the petrol bombs to create a wall of flame along Lumb Lane which would deter the attackers from violently setting upon the Asian community. They had not intended endangering life or property; they merely set out to deter.

The English Common Law upholds the right of self-defence, qualified by the fact that the force used in self-defence must not be in excess of that which is reasonable to repel the attack. The defendants claimed, therefore, that the manufacture and possible use of the petrol bombs was a perfectly legal act and necessary for the defence of the community against a racist onslaught.

The second line of defence turned on the definition of explosives. The defendants argued, through counsel, that petrol bombs were not explosives, that on impact they did not explode.

On June 16, the jurors, after deliberating for a day and a half, returned verdicts of not guilty. The breakdown was eleven to one.

The Mass Youth Movement and its Origins

Firstly, who are these young men and what are the forces which shaped them and their actions? The 12 defendants are all young Asians, that is to say the offspring of immigrants who arrived in Britain from India and Pakistan. They are products of the British educational system and are aged between 17 and 25 years. With the exception of Jayesh Amin, a university graduate, and Ishaq Kazi, a bank clerk, they were, at the time of their arrest, either unemployed workers or employed in working-class jobs in the city of Bradford.

Politically they were members of the United Black Youth League, (UBYL), a small organisation which, at the time of their arrest, was three to four months old. By then no statement of policy and position had been stated by the organisation, but an interpretation of their activities in campaigns indicated a radical approach to the issues of racial attacks on the Asian community and deportations of Asian workers.

What is certain is that these young men did not fall from the sky, nor are they odd balls prone to irrational behaviour. They are products of an historical movement which first made itself felt at the heart of British society in the summer of 1976.

Every new historical movement invariably emerges around a single issue and has as its objective the transcending, perhaps the shattering of the old. In this case the issue has been and continues to be the constant and murderous stream of racial attacks against the Asian community. The old at this juncture was and is being represented by the moderate approach of the traditional Asian organisations backed by the British state. The moment? The murder of 18 year old Gurdip Singh Chaggar by a gang of racials on the streets of Southall on June 4 1976.

Up to that moment, the Asian community throughout the United Kingdom had been complaining about racial attacks to anyone who would listen. Their experiences in this regard stretched way back to the late 1960s. Right-wing fascist organisations in some cases actually carried out the attacks and where they did not, they were able to stimulate disaffected young whites into what was popularly referred to as Paki bashing. The Asian community made it clear, through their organisations, that the British police showed a marked reluctance in tracking down and bringing their assailants to justice. They were perfectly right. The official position, repeated in parrot-like fashion by police forces up and down the country, was that the term, 'racial attack', was a figment of the Asian imagination. These



fails it is the turn of the backline to prevail. In this case the backline was the coercive forces of the British state.

During the general election of 1979, the fascist and racist National Front put up candidates in constituencies where there were large black communities. They had no chance of winning but it would give them the right to hold public meetings in black areas. And a public meeting was carded for Southall. Young Asians gathered in their thousands to prevent the meeting taking place. The police mobilised in enormous numbers. They proceeded to attack the protesters with a savagery which no section of the society, except the Irish in Northern Ireland, had experienced in years. One person, an anti racist school teacher, Blair Peach, was bludgeoned to death by police batons. Over 300 people were arrested and the cases were heard by carefully selected magistrates throughout London who returned a disproportionate number of guilty verdicts. Only by the most vulgar, empirical violence could the British state hope to contain the Asian mass movement and its white support under the hegemony of traditional Asian organisations.

There is the time honoured conclusion, born out of centuries of social and political experience, that repression of this order only serves to strengthen the resolve of the mass movement. In a period of five years, the young Asians had transformed the balance of power in this crucial struggle. Thousands of them participated in this movement. One moment of violent excess on the part of the police would not crush it.

All 12 defendants had at one time or



another been activists in that general movement. Their membership in the UBYL placed them in a special category though. By being members of that organisation, they were openly repudiating the traditional Asian formations which dominated the Bradford community. They were, therefore, consciously laying down the challenge to the state and its Asian phalanx for the hearts and minds of the Asian community.

Gata Aura and Tariq Ali were involved in the initial breakaway from the old. They, along with others, founded the Bradford Asian Youth Movement in 1977. There they mobilised for anti-fascist demonstrations and campaigned

against the deportation of Asian workers. The Bradford AYM had planned the Freedom March which would begin in Bradford and take in all major immigrant conurbations in Britain. They had hoped that this tactic would lay the foundation for Asian and West Indian unity. The march did not win effective support and was cancelled.

In the cut and thrust of attempting to transcend the old, a faction within the Bradford AYM succumbed to the practice of state funding and welfare activities. Gata Aura and Ali walked out and set up the United Black Youth League through which they aimed to draw membership from the West Indian community and to travel along a radical and revolutionary path. Above all, they persisted in their efforts to take the mass youth movement, with the support of older Asian workers, beyond the reactionary confines delineated by the old guard. For the membership of the UBYL, the manufacture of petrol bombs for use in the event of a racial attack was a normal activity. For this generation of young Asians there was nothing at all extraordinary in this approach. Also, Gata Aura had emerged as a national political figure as chairman of the Anwar Ditta campaign. He pursued this activity while being a member of the UBYL. Anwar Ditta, an Asian woman, was prevented by the immigration laws from having her children join her here. The campaign was national in scope and ultimately successful. Constant reports in the press and a documentary on television brought the issue to the nation's attention. The point to be made here is that by organising campaigns of this scope, Gata Aura and his organisation were in fact making clear what the traditional Asian organisations were not doing.



THE CAMPAIGN TO FREE THE TWELVE

As in Southall in the general election of 1979, the British state drew the line. On this occasion the Director of Public Prosecutions was the cutting edge. Once that office received the evidence collated by the police, two options were open to the judicial arm of the British state. The Director could take the normal course of charging the defendants simply with manufacturing petrol bombs. It would have been a low key, straight forward matter. During the summer riots, which were going on at the same time, many were so charged. He chose the abnormal and consequently highly political course. Out came the political bludgeon disguised in judicial garb aimed at smashing that tendency in the Asian Youth Movement which sought to transcend the moderate approach.

By opting for the conspiracy charges, the DPP lay down a major challenge to

the youth movement and its organisational activists. How did they fare? Here was a political opportunity, par excellence, to galvanise the thousands of young Asians into motion. They were there, alive and vibrant. They had shown their mettle over five dramatic years and all the evidence indicated they were on the move. Only weeks previous to the arrests, skinhead fascists were bussed into Southall for a pop concert at a local pub. Four members of the party abused an Asian shopkeeper and attacked Asian shop windows on the main street. The young Asians of Southall organised themselves, marched on the pub and despite police protection burnt the building down. Not only did a campaign to free the 12 have the opportunity to mobilise young Asians, the way was open to take the issue to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Thousands on the Asian continent would have responded. And finally, such a campaign would establish an organisational bridgehead which would have had the effect of eclipsing the traditional Asian organisations once and for all.

A group of activists from the Bradford AYM, in alliance with other forces in the community, formed the July 11th Committee to free the 12. The issue, which at once preoccupied the committee, was the political line they would adopt for mobilisation. This, of course, would turn on the defence which those arrested would employ. Courtenay Hay, a former member of the defunct Bradford Black Collective and now Chairman of the Committee, visited Gata Aura in prison. Gata Aura tells us that he informed Hay that the line was self-defence. Hay moves in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform. He returned to the Committee with the line that the defendants were framed. His campaign message was that: "The UBYL, because of its political activities of fighting racism, its resistance to fascism and carrying forward the anti imperialist struggle has been made a victim of political persecution by the state police".

It was obvious that he had elevated the UBYL to a position which did not accord with reality. The organisation was all of four months old, just about cutting its teeth and had made to date little im-



7 of the Bradford 12 after their acquittal

pact locally or nationally. Had political activists been operating in a situation in which the British state would deliberately frame an entire organisation on conspiracy to make petrol bombs, then we were living in dire straits indeed. Nowhere in the country was such evidence available. There was ample evidence in the trial that the Special Branch tailed the UBYL waiting to pounce once a mistake was made, but the frame up line was indigestible to all but the most gullible.

The July 11th Committee went to the public for the first time on August 12 1981 at the Arcadian Cinema in Bradford. The leaflet inviting the public to the meeting screamed, 'Framed by the Police'. Some 900 Asian youth attended that meeting but the explanation for the arrests was difficult, almost impossible to swallow. The 12 defendants were their peers whom they knew politically and socially. The audience would know that the 12 were quite capable of making petrol bombs. No big thing. Some of them might even have known of the details. This is not pure speculation. Large numbers of Asian youth in Bradford were aware that all the defendants made statements to the police on arrest, that they were party to making the bombs. The frame up line fell on deaf ears.

There was more to come. The platform boasted Councillor Ajeeb, Councillor Hameed and J.S. Sahota of the

IWA. The political practice of the speakers has been in mortal opposition to the mass radical and revolutionary movement of Asian youth. From that meeting onwards, the mass of Asian youth voted with their feet. They went away and stayed away.

Meanwhile the Yorkshire police had been visiting the elders of the Asian community warning them away from supporting the 12. They were terrorists, admonished the police. The elders accommodated the police and subsequently spewed out the line to their followers that the 12 were evil terrorists who had let down their villages back home.

The Committee persisted with the frame up line. In November, a full three months later, the Committee held a meeting at the London School of Economics and again the leaflet harangued, 'Framed by the Police'. The degeneration was complete. Southall, Brick Lane, Newham are traditional strongholds of Asian youth revolt. Yet the meeting was held at the LSE. It was clear that the campaign was firmly in the grips of the Asian middle classes (student types) with every left tendency, every miniscule radical outfit on board. Whatever else the campaign would do, it certainly could not take the mass movement one step further.

And the only line which would generate support in the Asian community

was the self-defence line. Sections on the committee in Bradford argued for it, debated the issue week after week. In the end they were defeated, overruled by the solicitors. The solicitors? Yes. The legal team advised that it would be the correct course to keep the defence secret and surprise the prosecution with the self-defence argument. They carried the day. Unimaginable!

We defy a single lawyer to explain what could the prosecution have done to strengthen their case if the self-defence issue was made public. Nothing at all. Here we need to explain the legal procedure involved. The police collate their evidence and send it to the Director of Public Prosecutions who returns the charges. All the police evidence is handed over to the defence. All. What on earth could the prosecution do to hinder the defence if the self-defence position was made public? Sweet F/A.

A word about lawyers in general. They, most of them, have the tendency to dominate the client. Not for them words of advice which the defendants may or may not accept. Their word is law. It needs a powerful, political campaign and equally strong defendants to hold the fort. Otherwise, lawyers do as they please, requiring of campaigns mere orchestration and stage decoration.

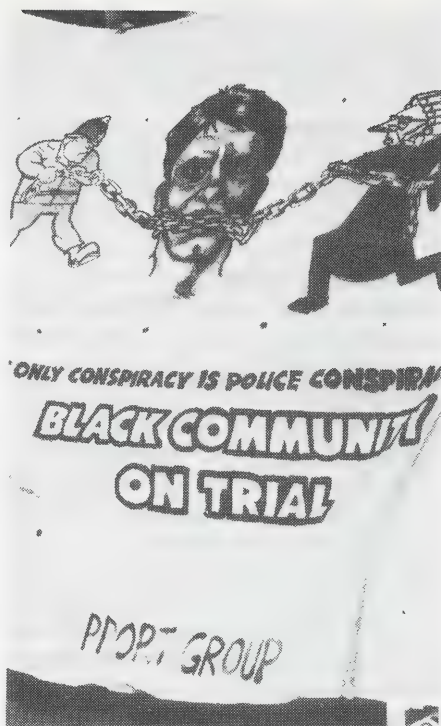
In time the campaign switched line to the obscure and liberal position that conspiracy charges were legally oppressive. Listen to this. "Conspiracy charges



relate more to defendants' political views and activity than to anything else. They have been used before as a political weapon by the British state to repress opposition." The question to be posed here is 'so what?' That argument is appropriate to the National Council of Civil Liberties who convince intellectuals about complex legal matters. It could not mobilise a single Asian youth. Young Asians would have responded to the line which said, 'Yes, we made the bombs, we made them in defence of the Asian community. Self-defence is No offence'. They would have flocked to that position from every Asian community in this country.

Instead, the campaign persisted in the conspiracy argument with the consequence that support came exclusively from Asian university students, law centre workers, other state-funded projects workers and various denominations of the white left. Here the campaign organisers had a fine political opportunity and squandered it. What is most ironic is that the campaign eventually adopted the self-defence position, but only after the trial was half-way through.

However all was not negative. The 12 entered Leeds Crown Court with much behind them. The mass movement's dramatic actions over a period of five



years ensured that no jury in this nation could be unaware of the general issue of racial attacks. That was a major plus. The campaign, although not historically in tune with the needs of the movement, was able to let thousands know of the trial. And the defence secured a major weapon when a Home Office

study revealed the existence of 2,581 instances of racial attacks in two months. William Whitelaw, Home Secretary, was forced to change the official position. In his introduction to the Home Office report he said, "The study has shown quite clearly that the anxieties expressed about racial attacks was justified". That admission was dragged out of him by the ceaseless militancy of young Asians on the question. And finally a team of radical lawyers, blooded in and shaped by the black revolt in Britain, would take the fight to the judicial authorities.

There was one major hurdle to transcend nevertheless. Tarlochan Gata Aura, on arrest, made two statements to the police. They had offered the inducement that he would be granted bail if he came clean. They also prompted him with the information that his fingerprints were found on one of the bottles. In his statement he mentioned Ishaq Kazi, Praveen Patel, Jayesh Amin, Bahram Noor Khan, Sabir Hussain, Tariq Ali and Vasant Patel as part of the general organisation. He admitted to making the bombs for use "in case the National Front were there causing trouble". Following Gata Aura's admission, all the other defendants crumbled and made varying admissions. Without these statements the prosecution would have had no case.

Gata Aura's admission created a great deal of acrimony among the defendants. The rank and file membership expressed a serious hostility to the leadership trio of Gata Aura, Amin and Ali. The three, they claimed, got them into the mess and created extra difficulties by being the first to sign statements of admission.

More needs to be said on this issue. On the face of it a serious question mark is raised when the leadership of a radical and revolutionary political organisation crumbles so easily before normal police interrogation. In this instance, the issue is much more complex. Gata Aura admits that he signed because he thought "it was the end of the world". Obviously he could see no way out. His attitude is quite understandable. The UBYL was perhaps the sole Asian youth organisation which sought to take the struggle forward against the state and a solid and entrenched wall of Asian reaction. An immense task, one which they were attempting in virtual isolation. Once the entire membership was locked up, with apparently incontrovertible evidence at hand, it was likely that a youth of 25 years with little experience of police stations, would crumble.

Tarlochan Gata Aura



THE TRIAL AT LEEDS CROWN COURT

And so to the Leeds Crown Court, April 26 1982. The first major issue at the trial turned on jury selection. Defence counsel challenged the fact that out of a panel of 75 none of the jurors were from the Asian community in Bradford, and only two prospective jurors were Asian. Old legal statutes were invoked, complex arguments were offered, specialist and technical jargon was employed. Eventually, Judge Beaumont, by an administrative sleight of hand, met the defence half way, having expressed his sympathy with the view that there should be some black representation on the jury. Eventually 12 jurors were sworn in, seven of whom were white and five black.

Paul Kennedy opened for the prosecution. Not a man of great sparkle, wit and incisive intellect which are the characteristics of an exceptional barrister. He was quite ordinary, mediocre even. He referred the court to events of July 11 1981 when he recalled "there was considerable disturbance in Bradford City Centre in which windows were broken, property was damaged and crowds behaved in a menacing way and had to be dispersed." Tariq Ali, he offered, was identified by police officers as moving between groups of Asians. Tarlochan Gata Aura, he added, was organising members of the UBYL to attend a meeting in which "Tarlochan made it clear that trouble was expected that evening and that petrol bombs should be made."

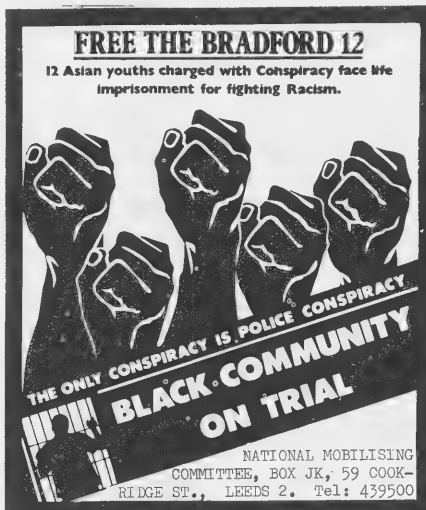
And here was the major point around which the central contention between defence and prosecution turned. "There was no threat from skinheads and the National Front. . . they [the bombs] were to be used against the police. . . against large shops when they would have a larger effect. . . they were to be used in a riot". Then he outlined the specific allegations against the 12:

Tarlochan Gata Aura Co-leader of the United Black Youth League (UBYL). Organised the meeting and the manufacture of petrol bombs. Obtained the petrol, stuffed the bottles with wicks. Wiped the bottles clean of finger prints. Went to the town centre to participate in a 'riot' and was arrested and charged with threatening behaviour.

Tariq Ali Co-leader of the UBYL. Took decision with Tarlochan Gata Aura to make petrol bombs on July 11. Went to town centre to agitate and incite a riot in which petrol bombs would be used. Arrested for disturbing the peace.

Jayesh Amin Leading member of the UBYL 'reluctantly' allowed his home to be used for the manufacture of petrol devices.

Giovanni Singh Bought rubber tubing for syphoning petrol. Arrested in town centre intervening in Ali's arrest.



Parveen Patel Present at UBYL meeting. Obtained milk bottles, filled with petrol syphoned from car.

Ishaq Mohammed Kazi Present at meeting. Allowed his car to be used to obtain necessary materials.

Bahram Noor Khan Present at UBYL meeting. Obtained petrol. Kept watch while others made devices.

Masood Malik Present at UBYL meeting. Obtained materials necessary for petrol bombs. Kept watch while others made devices.

Vasant Patel Present at UBYL meeting. Obtained milk bottles and material for wicks.

Saeed Hussain Present at UBYL meeting.

Sabir Hussain Present at UBYL meeting. Arrested in town centre intervening in Ali's arrest.

Ahmed Mansoor Present at UBYL meeting. Obtained bottles, kept watch, wiped bottles clean to remove finger prints.

The basis of all this information lay in the statements of admission signed by all the defendants.

Then there followed some 37 officers most of whom testified to the fact that they accurately recorded, in the language and wording of the defendants, hundreds of questions and answers. The line of cross examination by defence counsel aimed to show that sizeable areas of the police documentation were fabricated and that they intimidated, harassed and used violence against the defendants to sign certain admissions.

The major issue turned on the use for which the bombs were manufactured. The police claimed that some defendants admitted that the bombs were to be used against the police and property. The defence denied this allegation and claimed that those words were fabricated by the police.

The high point of the fabrication issue was reached in Helena Kennedy's cross examination of Officer Maloney. He claimed that he questioned Sabir Hussain extensively without taking any notes. Some 200 questions were asked and replied to. Maloney claimed to have gone away and recorded verbatim 196 questions and answers.

"Did you do that from memory?" teased Ms Kennedy.

"Yes, I did", replied Maloney triumphantly.

"What was the first question I asked you today?" demanded Kennedy, a sharp edge to her Scottish brogue.

"I can't remember", surrendered Maloney.

And then there was the crafty 'hatchet job' on Detective Inspector Sidebottom executed by Paddy O'Connor, counsel for Masood Malik. Paddy enquired of Sidebottom whether, "Further to my previous statement I would like to clarify the points which I did not mention before", were really the words of "an 18 year old Yorkshire lad?" "Yes", replied Sidebottom.

O'Connor then read from Sidebottom's own statement, "Further to my previous statement I would like to clarify the point I did not mention before" Out came O'Connor's sledge hammer. "Did the 18 year old lad draft your second statement for you?" Sidebottom was demolished.

Highlights those were, but there were

many like moments in the detailed and rigorous cross examination by defence counsel.

At the end of the day the jurors were aware that the police were prolific at putting words in mouths of defendants.

Then there was the other key issue. Were racial attacks prevalent in Bradford? Officer after officer described Bradford as a haven of multi-racial peace. They would not budge even in the face of clear evidence to the contrary. They made themselves sound and look ridiculous.

At the end of the prosecution's case, the defence is invited to make submissions. They are invariably to the effect that the prosecution had not made a case against this or that defendant. Following like submissions, Sabir Hussain and Saeed Hussain had count 1 dropped against them. There was no evidence to show that they had participated in manufacturing the actual devices. Both charges were dropped against Jayesh Amin, there being no prima facie case made against him. He was set free.

It was now the turn of the defence. Mansfield opened for Tarlochan Gata Aura who then went onto the witness stand.

Soft features belied a formidable political experience. Tarlochan had just turned 25. He was blooded in the anti fascist, anti racist movement of Asian youth and sought relentlessly for some organisational and ideological clarity through which to advance the Asian struggle. He had joined the International Socialists, a Trotskyist offshoot. There



he was part of a black caucus which probed and prodded the leadership on its grasp of the black question and its practice in relation to this vibrant and lively terrain. 'Black and White Unite and Fight' was all the leadership could muster. Tarlochan and the majority of the caucus left and formed 'Samaj inna Babylon,' a combination of Asian and West Indian activists who produced a newspaper. That organisation fell apart and he moved on to the Indian Progressive Youth Movement in Bradford,

then to the Bradford AYM, the Black Socialist Alliance and finally the UBYL.

Tarlochan gave his evidence quietly and moderately, if somewhat nervously. His delivery under examination in chief and cross examination could be described as 'suaviter in modo, fortiter in re'. Moderate in manner, strong in content.

Yes, he had made the bombs; yes, he had organised others to manufacture them. He would take full responsibility. He had pursued the course because he was told that the fascists were coming to attack and a wall of flame would deter them. No, he was not a man of violence. He had not left the Bradford AYM because he wished to pursue violent methods. He left because the organisation had degenerated into living off state funding. Coolly and calmly he informed the court of the different campaigns in which he had been involved. At the end of his three day ordeal, he impressed the jury and the public as a young man of moderation and sensitivity, searching for ways and means of alleviating the Asian condition. It was a splendid performance and the high point of the trial.

Evidence was called to show that the Asian community throughout Britain had been living under a reign of racist terror, and that on July 11 1981, the whole community was under virtual siege once news of an impending racist onslaught spread like wild fire. Evidence was also put forward, and not questioned by the prosecution, that a Chief Inspector was actually informed of the impending attack and the police did nothing to protect the community.

Then came the dramatic moment. Not a single defendant, apart from Tarlochan, would go into the witness box. They would make statements from the dock on which they could not be cross examined. Even Tariq Ali, a formidable political activist, stayed away. It was a curious decision. Thousands throughout Britain would have been moved by their responses to the prosecutor's questions. Silence!

The lawyers advised on this course because they speculated that the defendants were too naive to withstand lengthy and hostile cross examination. We beg to differ. These speculations are based on interviews between the lawyers and defendants. A more precise analysis of those interviews must be presented if we are to be convinced.

It is understandable that the defendants were thrown on the defensive when they discovered that the campaign failed to muster the potential support from young Asians, but that they could not withstand hostile cross examination because of their naivete is so much liberal speculation based on the poor,

docile Asian victim theory.

Five years of mass revolt do not docile Asians make. All of these young men have experiences in organising demonstrations, campaigns and other militant activity. They have lived through the jungle of the school playground, the cut and thrust of working class urban social life, three to four months in prison and the rigorous discipline of the bail conditions for close to a year. At the end of that process you become many things and certainly not among them are docile and naive victims. The mass of Asian youth up and down the country would have warmed to the spirited defences which they surely could have mounted.

The closing speeches and the judges summing up were of the usual order, apart from odd flourishes of rhetoric from defence counsel.

The jurors deliberated for a day and a half before returning verdicts of not guilty. The verdict carried clear implications. The five black and seven white jurors were asked by the defence to scale two formidable hurdles.

Firstly, they were asked to say that the manufacture of petrol bombs was a legal act required to meet the threat that racials posed against the Asian community. And that the petrol bombs were necessary because the police failed to protect Asians from racial attacks.

Secondly, they were required to accept that 'the best police force in the world' contained men and women who would fabricate evidence against defendants.

In a provincial area, far away from London, a mixed jury, by accepting the defence's version of events, defied the fundamental propositions that the police placed before them. There, the mass movement of recent years was expressing itself.



Call to the Bookfair

August 1982

Second International Book Fair of Radical Black 3rd World Books

Dear Friend

The First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books, held in London from the 1st to 3rd April 1982, was the significant international event we claimed it would be.

It was a genuine meeting of the continents for writers, publishers, distributors, booksellers, artists, musicians, film makers, and the people who inspire and consume their creative productions. For all it was a valuable and stimulating experience. Some of the moments, like the international poetry reading, electric and extraordinary, will live long in our memories.

The First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books and the international response we obtained was a land mark in the new and expanding phase in the growth of radical ideas and concepts and their expression in literature, politics, music, art and social life.

The international movement of events since then exemplifies the continuing disintegration of the post war settlements, and poses on all our agendas either global renewal or global barbarism.

The Second International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books will be held in Brixton, London.

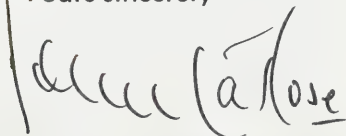
The format of the Book Fair will be the same as last year. The Book Fair will last three days from Thursday to Saturday (March 17th – 19th 1983), accompanied by the Book Fair Festival Week of concerts, readings, exhibitions, cinema, forums, and seminars from Sunday March 13th to Sunday March 20th, 1983. There will be forums on the New Cross Massacre and on Resurgence or Barbarism.

The First International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books attracted over 100 publishers from Africa, the Caribbean, North America, Asia and Europe. Scores of librarians, booksellers, educational institutions, artists and writers participated. Our turnstiles recorded more than 6000 in attendance throughout the festival week.

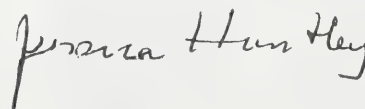
Bogle—L'Ouverture Publications, New Beacon Books and Race Today Publications, pioneers in radical black book and magazine publishing and in international bookselling, invite you to take part in this Second International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books which will take place in Brixton, London, at the Lambeth Town Hall on Thursday 17th, Friday 18th and Saturday 19th March 1983.

We hope you will be able to participate and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



John La Rose
Joint-Director



Jessica Huntley
Joint-Director

Second International Book Fair of Radical Black & Third World Books

Second International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books
At Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton, SW2
On Thursday March 17th to Saturday March 19th, 1983

Cost of Stands:

1 double stand	36 sq. ft	£285.00
1 single stand	18 sq. ft	£135.00
Half of a stand	9 sq. ft	£ 54.00
One third of a stand	6 sq. ft	£ 36.00
One quarter of a stand	4½ sq. ft	£ 27.00
Small presses and periodicals	£9.00 per title. (will be manned by the organisers.)	

PAYMENT

Application forms should be completed and returned by Monday, October 18th, 1982 to, International Black Book Fair, New Beacon Books, 76 Stroud Green Road, Finsbury Park, London N4 3EN, England. At least half of the fee must be enclosed with application form (no deposit will be refunded). The full payment must be made by Saturday, January 15th, 1983. Cheques must be made payable to, International Black Book Fair, in sterling or its equivalent. For foreign currency cheques, add £1.50 for bank charges.

ADVERTISE IN THE BOOK FAIR BROCHURE

We shall be producing a souvenir brochure for an enlarged Second Book Fair. The brochure will be on sale at Lambeth Town Hall during the period of the Book Fair (March 17th - March 19th 1983), at all the events taking place throughout the Book Fair week (March 13th - March 20th 1983) and during the weeks before and the months after the Fair

The brochure will contain information on the publishers taking part in the Book Fair, the participants in the various events and details of all the events. There will also be general articles and many illustrations.

READERSHIP: Our readership includes representatives of libraries and educational institutions, writers, publishers, distributors, booksellers, artists and, of course the reading public: those in attendance and people abroad to whom brochures will be sent.

DISTRIBUTION: Our estimated readership for 1983 is 15,000 and we aim that your advertisements will familiarise our readership with the depth and breadth of radical and black publishing which is represented at the Fair

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Full page	19cm x 28cms	£120
Half page	19cms x 13½cms	£ 65
Quarter page	9cms x 6½cms	£35
One eighth page	9cms x 6½cms	£ 20

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FREE FOR ALL

TECHNOLOGY AND THE WORKING CLASS

We live in a period of profound technological change. At the heart of this change is *information technology* based on the *microchip*. The microchip is transforming both households and workplaces with its miniaturised electronic circuits. Everywhere we are starting to see electronic games, videos and hi-fi's, pocket calculators and electronically-controlled washing machines, automated typewriters and desktop computers, and automated lathes, production machines and processes of all kinds.

And yet the first commercially available microchip appeared only as recently as 1971. Barely a decade later human life on the whole planet is being transformed.

The microchip-packed missiles whistling around in the South Atlantic war, aimed at ships and planes that are themselves controlled by computers, is evidence of this. This war is also a timely reminder that the microchip was born in the military sphere. The US Government pumped in millions of dollars to develop it in the first place for its defence and space programmes.

If only the huge sums of capital and the sophisticated technology involved in military applications were used to improve the conditions of all people throughout the world! We would all agree.

But even if we achieved this, another central problem would remain to be solved: *technology itself is not neutral*. It stands firmly on the side of wealth and power and the social class that controls it. Like law, technology is riddled with the social relations of authority and control. Our movement must face up to the challenge of changing the very nature of technology. To liberate ourselves we will have to liberate technology.

Today, technology is being used in the workplace in the most repressive way. Hundreds of thousands of jobs

are being automated out of existence especially in the advanced capitalist countries; with few jobs being created we face the threat of permanent unemployment. Young people are excluded from the job market, part-time women workers in manufacturing industry are special targets for automation while immigrant workers' employment conditions are also worsening.

If unemployment hits some groups particularly hard, microelectronics inside the workplace is being used to reorder the whole relationship between workers and capitalists.

The end of the long postwar economic boom in 1974 and the following recession has provided capital with the context in which to act. Technology is now being used to *remove* groups of workers that have grown powerful in good times. In the motor industry robots have replaced spot welders and paint sprayers and thus broken up the most militant sections of the workforce. It is management's determined use of technology that lies behind the recent defeats of Leyland workers in Britain and Fiat workers in Italy.

Throughout all workplaces workers' skills are being passed over to computer-controlled machines. Factory workers, office workers, professional white collar workers — all are at risk; even the computer programmers and designers are facing *deskilling* in their jobs.

When a machine incorporates the skills previously exercised by a worker, then the worker is deprived of a source of power. Management can then use the machine to regulate the speed and intensity of its operator. Machines and processes can be linked together and placed under several levels of computer control. In this way, key decisions previously made by workers are transferred to top managers who sit at the top of the computerised pyramid. If power is concentrated at the top, discipline is

enforced at the bottom by automated monitoring of worker and machine functions, increasing the *intensity* of labour.

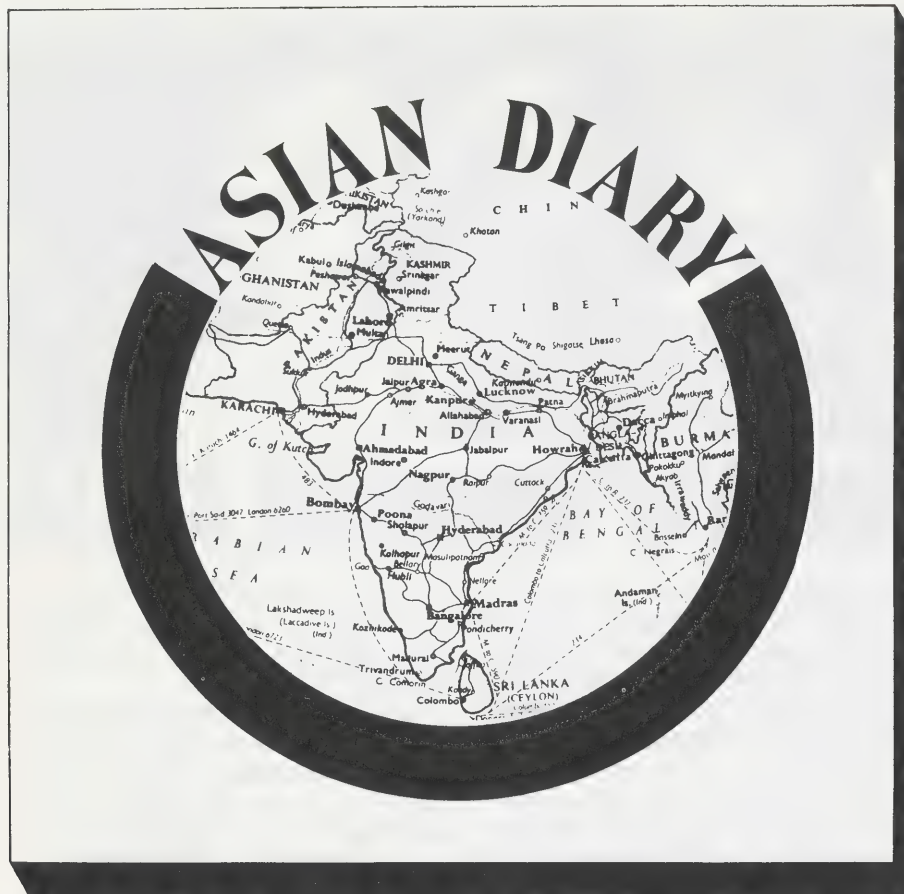
A system that operates like this is being used by the National Coal Board to transform mining. Whereas up to now what goes on at the coal face has depended almost completely on miners themselves, the new central computer system, MINOS, will control and monitor every operation in a mine or group of mines — *directly*. Miners are threatened with a 50% cut in their numbers, loss of their skills to computer-controlled machines and a serious loss in their bargaining power.

Capitalism organises technology in such a way as to increase its profits and control over labour: the shape technology takes is no more *inevitable* than capitalism itself.

There are alternatives that we can fight for now. There are tactics that we can use, just as we may in a court of law for example, that aim to preserve and build our power and organisation. Developments in technology can be resisted, once we have a clear sense of the alternatives in each particular case.

Technology can be organised in democratic and human-centred ways, increasing the range and quality of human skills. In fact microcomputers lend themselves more to this than to the way they are traditionally used — to control and deskill. Technologies can and must be used to liberate humanity from necessity — from drudgery, poverty, starvation and disease. For developing countries in particular, a liberated use of technology could avoid the worst ravages of industrialisation. Liberated technology could help to create a freedom the world has never yet seen, where our time is not organised as labour time but is organised freely in creative activity.

By Dave Feickert



THE STRIKE AT AIR INDIA

By Mikla Singh
Our Asian Correspondent

Since Indian political independence and since the settlement of Indians on a large scale in the UK, London has become one of the centres of operation for Air India, the national airline. Air India has a virtual monopoly on freight and has built up complex and profitable cargo business. Like other large airlines Air India has opted to operate from Heathrow rather than from Gatwick and its cargo operation is in the Heathrow complex. The entire London operation is staffed, at Heathrow and at the Bond Street offices, by 360 workers, most of them of Indian origin if not nationality and locally recruited.

The management, however, is based in India and the regional directors and the other top posts are filled from Delhi. Indian management, used to Indian

work-practices and the caste-style hierarchies within the nationalised companies of India, are sent out to take charge.

The story of the current Air India strike in London starts at the point where a British based work-force builds itself into a militant branch of the Transport and General Workers Union of Britain and comes into conflict with the management and the entire panoply of what passes for Indian business practice.

In 1979 the Air India workers took on the management and forced it, through a successful strike, to sign several agreements. The basic agreement was on parity of pay with workers in British Airways. Indian journalists were fond of pointing out that £5000 could be translated into almost a hundred thousand rupees. No worker in India earns that much. But, of course, the comparison is facile, the transla-

tion futile, because no Indian worker pays twenty rupees to ride on a bus or two thousand rupees in electricity bills, or for that matter a hundred and twenty rupees for a daily curry and rice. Parity was needed and attained. The airline was making a profit and could afford to pay.

The other agreements concluded with management were on industrial relations procedures. They followed the standard lines of negotiation and complaint, of checks and balances accepted by the Transport and General Workers Union in the other companies in which it had membership.

Between the successful conclusion of that strike and June this year, the standing organisation of the union, the shop stewards committee, composed of representatives from Bond Street and from the cargo and passenger sides of Heathrow, published a regular internal Union Bulletin. The function of the bulletin was not only that of keeping the branch together. It began to act as a watchdog over the mal-practices of management. Several times it accused the management, based in London and in India, naming names in some cases and providing irrefutable facts, of financial corruption. Air India managers were hiving off profitable Air India charters to sales agents from whom they would take a rake-off.

There were also cases in which Air India high-ups and other politically influential people claimed and were given preferential treatment, to the detriment of the ordinary fare-paying passengers without 'influence'. Apart from that the shop stewards committee has, in its possession, evidence, as yet unpublished by them, of the sexual harassment of a female worker by one of the top managers of the London operation.

The management struck back. With the clear intention of taking on the union, and it now transpires with the political backing of the Indian government to do so, they challenged the union on rostering practices. The rosters of duty that the management wanted to foist on the union were much like those that British Rail is manoeuvring ASLEF into accepting. The new rosters would have meant loss of money and possible redundancies for Air India workers. The union instituted a work-to-rule.

On June 5 the management handed one of the Heathrow shop stewards, Roy de Silva, a letter of suspension. His alleged misdemeanour was bad time-keeping. The letter stated that he had been five minutes late on such and such a day and ten minutes on another day. There might have been a case for some

supervisor to have a word with de Silva on these counts, but there was nothing in the charges against him which could remotely be labelled 'gross misconduct'. The union then demanded that de Silva be reinstated forthwith or that the procedures for disciplining workers, agreed by the management with the union, be followed. The management was spoiling for a fight. They refused.

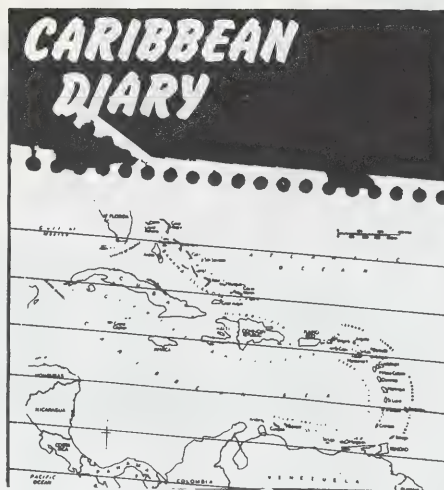
The TGWU's airport official, in conversation with the Air India's solicitor, was told that the first letter of suspension to the shop steward was not legal and that he was accused of 'tampering with rosters'. The union side then asked management to either follow disciplinary procedures against de Silva or to take the whole case to the Arbitration Conciliation and Advisory Service (ACAS), the body which deals with such disputes under British law. The management refused.

The union branch came out on strike. Their meeting prior to the strike took a nem-con decision to oppose the dismissal of de Silva and bring the management back to accepted and agreed procedures.

The strike brought the cargo operation of Air India almost to a halt. As the strike got under way and pickets were mounted at Heathrow, at the cargo terminal and at Bond Street, several workers trickled back to work. In 1979 the picket lines of Air India were acrimonious. People who went back to work were jeered as blacklegs. This time the mood was different. Those who were forced back to work would stand on the picket line with the strikers who decided to stay out and attempt to explain that they were behind the union on the issue, but were personally hard-pressed financially and couldn't afford to stay out. There was no jeering. A grim understanding prevails on the picket line.

Through the three weeks of picketing the hundred workers who are still out have received telegrams of dismissal from Air India. They have managed to mobilise the support of several branches of the TGWU at Heathrow Airport.

In unofficial conversations with the shop stewards committee of the strikers, the London based managers have made it clear that the strike and its handling is out of their hands. The government of India has sent a Mr Lalit Bhasin, a solicitor who works for Indira Gandhi herself, to handle matters and industrial negotiations on behalf of the management. The intention is to break the shop stewards committee and render the union ineffective in London by selective dismissal of all those who have participated at any level in union activity and in the exposure of corruption.



By Gerry Kangalee
Our Caribbean Correspondent

St Lucia

Who was most pleased by John Compton's United Workers' Party victory in General Elections in St. Lucia in May? United States Ambassador to the Eastern Caribbean — Milan Bish.

Bish organised an economic task force for St. Lucia in the wake of Compton's victory as a way of affirming the Reagan administration's support for anything that seems to be anti-communist.

Compton, recognising the gullibility of Reagan's rightwing recruits, fought his campaign on a virulent anti-communist basis. This was to attract American support moreso than to impress St. Lucians. Compton would have won even if he did not campaign.

The victory of the mendicant colonial Compton, should not be seen as a victory for capitalist roaders over those who favour socialism etc. It should be seen as the logical outcome of thirty months of the most obscene spectacle of infighting among the representatives of the middle classes who form the St. Lucia Labour Party.

Odlum, Josie, Pilgrim et al, have no one to blame for their electoral defeat but themselves. It is not enough for people to preach, they must practise what they preach.

Compton himself, has no cause for any great joy. The approximately 27,000 votes the U.W.P. received is equivalent to the 27,000 voters who stayed away from the polls. This is just over 4% less than those who voted in 1979. The 'Westminster model' is cracking up throughout the Caribbean and no amount of mealy-mouthed, platitudinous utterings about 'commitment to democracy' can change that fact. The carcass is not only rotting, the stench has become overpowering. Pity the poor fools who believe they can resurrect the corpse by ap-

plying large doses of disinfectant and deodorant. The corbeaux and flies may be driven off but the internal dis-integration cannot be stopped. But then no one expects our colonial cowards to appreciate dialectics.

Guyana

Guyana, as the saying goes, has gone through the chute. The Burnham regime has finally succeeded in pauperising that magnificent country, often described as the hope of the Caribbean.

The gifted people of Guyana have been reduced to abject poverty, loss of dignity, bitterness, cynicism and a growing sense of hopelessness which is more frightening than everything else.

The land of Martin Carter, Wilson Harris and Mittelholzer, the land of Walter Rodney, has been reduced to the brink of collective suicide. In the face of Venezuelan ambition, all bloody Forbes can offer is belated admission of mismanagement, the strengthening of the repressive apparatus and the flaunting of 'Rabbi' Washington's 'Brownshirts' —

Beyond the point of no return hope lies not in desperation, salvation lies not in love but in destruction:

"If we must die, let it not be like dogs"

Barbados

The reality of capitalist recession and its impact on a monoculture, tourist-oriented economy, has forced Bajans to face the fact that they live in a society on the edge of repression, despite what they have been led to believe about their grounding in 'British democratic tradition' and related nonsense.

In the wake of the recession and the losing of the Caribbean Basin Initiative in the labyrinthine corridors of the American Congress, Prime Minister Adams has tried to foist an Emergency Powers Bill on the people. The antagonism of the response from almost all sectors has been surprising for its vehemence, particularly from the Trade Unions. The Bill seeks to break strikes among other things and concentrate power in the hands of the Minister of National Security. Is Little England to go the way of Big England?

In my next article I will attempt to deal at some length with the effects of the recession in Trinidad and the ineffective non-measures adopted by the Chambers regime in attempting to appear to be dealing with it.

CREATION FOR LIBERATION

MUSIC
THEATRE
BOOKS
FILM

MUSIC
THEATRE
BOOKS
FILM
MUSIC
THEATRE

Is Przonand Great Again?

Within the last decade a great country has been shaken by unprecedented political events, including the dramatic emergence of new personalities, not only in character and achievements, but now in sex.

The country is Przonand (pronunciation impossible except to masters of the language). It is a large and formerly prosperous territory in the heart of a distant continent. The country's population was divided, more or less, into two classes of people — women and men. The women ruled and occupied nearly all, in fact actually all, the positions of authority in politics, economics and all important affairs. Men had equal rights but somehow they never rose higher than assistant to the junior head of any department or institution. However, to the astonishment of the world, one man, after centuries of politics in the country, rose to the position of Prime Minister.

Let us describe this unique achiever. He was a tall man, 6' 2½", he weighed 14 stone, and according to the practice of the country, he should have been a very effective figure. But despite the advantage of a figure, adequate in all respects, he managed to generate an ineffective if not unpleasing impression, not only on his political opponents, but on his colleagues and on the population in general. A public is not to be blamed.

It was usually whispered among the cognoscenti that his barber was incompetent and in fact, there is a personal friendship dating from early association which is responsible for the P.M. looking like a third rate grocer on the day of his daughter's wedding. And everybody is agreed that when you saw the politician's routine artificial smile that quite a mediocre dentist could fix his teeth, at any rate those in front.

One says this only for the record, because the smile was admitted to be the most ineffective and unconvincing within living memory.

I mention the above because when a person reaches the stage of being the first of his sex to achieve the highest post in the kingdom, all material, if not precious but even unpleasing, should be set down in print for succeeding generations: they are not needed for contemporaries for what is being said here is a commonplace in all classes of society.

However, two things matter with a Prime Minister. First, the winning of the vote which our Prime Minister has gained (more of that another time) but also what the ruler of the country says. I may be accused here of bias so I shall confine myself to the basic facts of the case.

All of us today know that World War I set the pattern for modern warfare. In that war 10 million people were killed. In the second year of his government, the Prime Minister found himself in a war between Przonand and some insignificant country in a distant area. Przonand won the war with 250 dead. To the astonishment and abashed silence of the whole community at the news that the country (Ignorante by name) had been defeated, the Prime Minister was heard to shout "Przonand is great again". It is notable that very few if any commented on this astonishing statement. Przonand had taken part in great historical events, not infrequently in war, in which it had killed thousands of Africans, East Indians, Chinese and lesser breeds. The country had also fought in World Wars which it would have lost but for the intervention of foreign countries which spoke the same language.

Przonand had undoubtedly declined as a warmonger, but no one suspected that it had reached the extent that this decline had so sunk into the consciousness of the unfortunate country so as to believe that winning a war in which 250 people had been killed would once more make Przonand

"great again".

It must be said that intemperance, or to be plain, mediocrity, or to be plainer still, dumbheadedness of public statement, is one of the few distinctions which this Prime Minister has draped the unique position he has won. Some political enemies had prepared explosives which killed a number of innocent people in Przonand. Many people expressed their sorrow and legitimate horror. It was left to our Prime Minister to say that the terrorists who (for political reasons which everybody knew) had thrown the bombs, because they did not understand democracy. Once again a notable silence reigned among all commentators.

One final example must be given because it provoked a reply. Some parts of the population had rioted. One of the popular newspapers had said in a headline that the young people had rioted for greed, to be able to take things. The Prime Minister felt it necessary to make a statement, and not only stated that the rioting was due to greed, but mentioned as proof the paper which had said it. The paper immediately published that the word "greed" was only in the headlines but the article itself had stated that oppression and social sufferings of that section of the population had prompted the explosion. The Prime Minister was left hanging tall and dry on the single and shaky tree of greed as the cause of a great political upheaval.

We shall not continue with this sad account. We have been tempted to it because we are in a country where no men have achieved really high positions, until now. A journalist has to see to it that no one is able to say without reasonable cause that "Przonand is great again."

Columbus Ladislav Romulus

Dreadful

COUNTRYMAN

Produced by Island Films

Reviewed by Akua Rugg

"Jah would never give a power to a baldhead run come crucify the dread...".

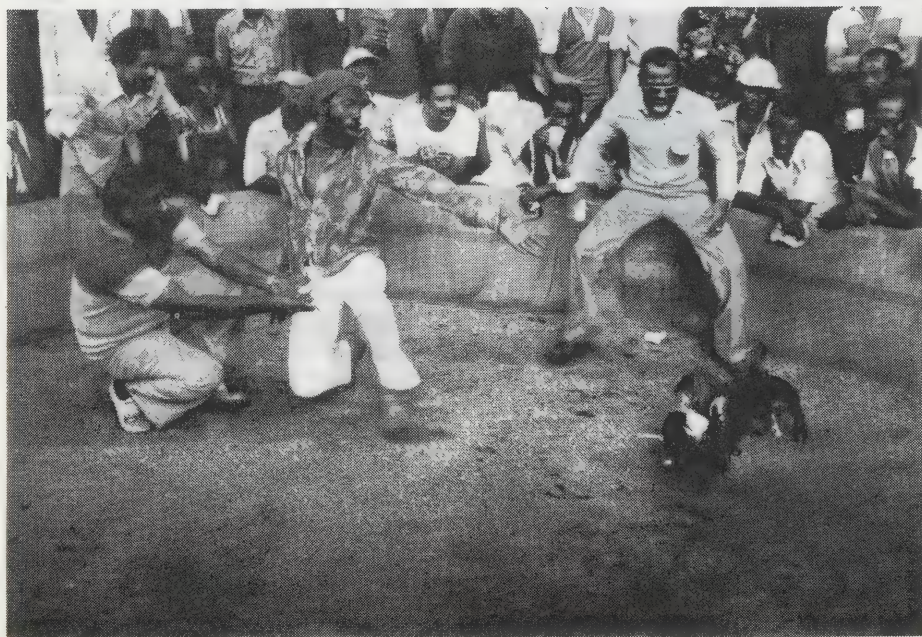
wrote the late, great Bob Marley. How ironic that Island Records, who promoted his work, should have produced the film 'Countryman', which exploits the image of Rasta, to the sect's detriment and their own commercial advantage. For apart from the soundtrack, contributed by artists from the Island stable, the film has very little merit.

Because of the political nature of much of reggae music, the film has been cast in the mould of a musical



political thriller. When, for example, Countryman, the hero of the film rescues two witless white American hippies who tumble and stumble into the geographic and political jungles of Jamaica, the trio gorge themselves on the fruits of the island to the strains of 'Pass It On'. Throughout the film other such golden oldies set the mood of the scenes.

In recognition that not all who groove to the rhythm of the music will necessarily dig its blues, the dynamic elements of the plot, which concern the violent struggle for power between government and opposition during the last elections held in Jamaica, are diluted with a syrupy sub-plot romanticising the lives of the island's Rastas. Lured by the prospect of hard music



the captive audience has to endure a soft scenario.

The producers of the film make the great claim for it that it was inspired by the words and music of Bob Marley. Strange then that it should be derivative, sentimental, shallow and tedious. Script, direction and acting are distinctly lacking in lustre. Countryman is a highly conservative film. It comes from a long line of films depicting blacks as superstitious savages. Countryman, with clouds of ganga trailing about his glamorous locks, not to mention his tendency towards being of service to whites in distress, is merely the noble savage updated to the 1980s.

If my review does not reveal a coherent plot for the film, it is because there is none. Alas! Poor Marley, he deserved a better epitaph than this.

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FOR NINA SIMONE

as in a ritual

we would set the needle in AWE

Between the grooves

then, fall back to mediate again

the meaning of *Lilac Wine* . . .

soon the croo-ooning sermon would begin

of man/

of love/

of hate/

of life/

of pain/

of love

of being a woman:

Nina

Underneath, the piano talked

along the range of emotion

and then back again

while above,

In perfect control

she pleaded huskily to her man:

'AH LO-OOVES YOUU, POOR-GEEE. . . DOAN'T LET 'IM TAKE MEE-EEeee. . .'

and, all too soon

the music faded into the whirring

of a lifeless turntable:

still entranced,

we breathed a tearful sigh,

wishing we knew

even then

wishing we knew how it felt to be free. . .

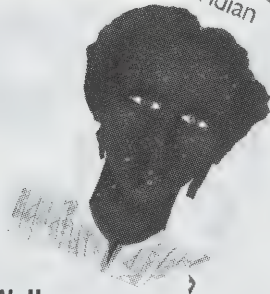
to LOVE,

as Nina sang.

© Meta Gail Wilborn

Zenith

Alice Walker
Meridian



Meridian

by Alice Walker

Published by the Women's Press Ltd

London E1. Price £2.95

Reviewed by C L R James

This is not a mere review. It is
propaganda and praise I say: get a
copy and read. Since the end of WW II
I had not read a novel superior to this.

The venue is the American South.
Meridian is a young black woman,

other main characters are Truman,
a young black and Lynne a white
girl from the south who Truman mar-
ries after deserting Meridian.

In this book there are episodes
and people. Take this picture of the
savage persecution of blacks by whites.

"Meridian had tried to keep the
girl, whose name was Anne, with
her, but in the confusion she dis-
appeared. In the middle of the
night there were screams from
another cell, far down the row.
Screams, according to the guards,
of an alcoholic who thought she
was being chased around her cell
by giant spiders. But Meridian
knew it was Anne, and though
she never saw her again, she be-
gan to imagine she did, and the
screams became an accompaniment
to the guilt already weighing her

WEAR AH TAM

Ah know yuh go agree most ah we fashion conscious
Ah know yuh go agree almost all ah we gregarious
We now see eye to eye bout da pie in de sky
We gee dem ah tase an we no go we own place
Nexttime wear ah tam so dem kar see yuh face
Nexttime wear ah tam so dem kar gee yuh no embrace
Dem talking bout arming de robots fuh shooting
Dem harming relations presenting conditions
Dem war we surrender, but ah sorry, cause we kar render
we tougher dan we parent, we ent no consignment, bound fuh no slaughter

Ah say we smarter.

Chorus: Nexttime wear ah tam

Cause ah jam

Wear ah glove

Help gee it ah shove

Mek it topple from above

Wear ah tam

Join ah ban

Free de lan

From oppressors

Back room double dealers

Infant molesters

Tightrope dangles

Parliamentary hustlers

Property developers

Crown ah hate

It ent too late

Remember de African dem call de Maroon

Transported to Jamaica, he free heself soon, real soon

He defeated de British in two bloody wars of attrition

He even laid down many ah condition

Sign de treaty in blood demanded General Cudjoe or yuh get no remission

Chorus: Nexttime wear ah tam. . .

It ent too late

Dem same Maroon offspring are alive today

For many ah decade dey've been de minstay

Ah dis very country dem call Great Britain

Dis very society dat's become stricken wid dewdrops ah malice

and hatred an fear

But ah happy tu say, deliverance is near

Wear yuh tam idren, deliverance is near.

© The Arch Angel

down".

There are people in this book, about 50 people, each taking a page or two but to me there is nothing more vivid than the savage fate of Anne. I cannot forget it.

This book treats of sexuality, the sexual relation before desire, the relation during desire, the regret, the resentment, the rejection of desire every particular nuance of sexuality is here but without self consciousness in the writer and therefore not a trace of it in the reader. We spend a lot of time tracing the comings and goings maritally and sexually of Meridian, Lynne and Truman.

So we go, episode after episode, character after character, normal, and abnormal in a unique combination of originality, precision, and naturalness until she stands outside a church

of black people. Listening to them singing at a funeral service and the truth breaks into her and to us.

"It came to her. "Look," they were saying, "we are slow to awake to the notion that we are only as other women and men, and even slower to move in anger, but we are gathering ourselves to fight for and protect what your son fought for on behalf of us. If you will let us weave your story and your son's life and death into what we already know — into the songs, the sermons, the 'brother and sister' — we will soon be so angry we cannot help but move. Understand this, "they were saying, "the church" (and Meridian knew they did not mean simply "church", as in Baptist, Methodist or whatnot, but rather communal spirit, together-

ness, righteous convergence), "the music, the form of worship that has always sustained us, the kind of ritual you share with us, these are the ways to transformation that we know. We want to take this with us as far as we can."

". Only in a church surrounded by the righteous guardians of the people's memories could she even approach the concept of retaliatory murder. Only among the pious could this idea both comfort and uplift."

So there it is the social revolution and there for us is an outline of one of the greatest problems of revolutionary theory: how is one to be sure that the great mass of the uneducated could be so uplifted mentally and politically that they can become a natural and conscious part of the social revolution. I did not have the faintest idea that that is where she is going. But after my shock I realised at once that all those peculiar characters and incidents were headed towards this climax.

Now perhaps not yet fully until a second reading we are able to recognise the place in the totality of the incidental. It is only on re-reading that as early as page 17 we shall see the following.

"Fallen asleep have you?" It was a voice calling her from a decidedly unrevolutionary past. They made her ashamed of that past, and yet all of them had shared it. The church, the music, the tolerance shown to different beliefs outside the community, the tolerance shown to strangers. She felt she loved them. But love was not what they wanted, it was not what they needed.

They needed her to kill. To say she would kill. She thought perhaps she could do it. Perhaps."

It is only now that we are able to understand the meaning of the opening page printed before the title 'Meridian', is "the highest point of power, prosperity, splendour etc; Zenith, Apex; culmination;" and then to select from many others "Of our passing through the highest point in the daily course of any heavenly body". That is what she says that Meridian is and that is the book she aimed to write and in my opinion I say unreservedly that she has succeeded and never before in fiction during my lifetime have I seen the everyday, the contingent, the unique, the fantastic, moulded together so that they become a sweet actual and prospective of the social revolution.

**FORWARD EDGE IN AFRO-
CARIBBEAN ART**
Exhibition at Africa Centre
Reviewed by Chris Abuk

A key event at the Africa Centre was an exhibition called 'The Pan Afrikan Connection' which showed the work of five young black artists from the West Midlands — Eddie Chambers, Dominic Dawes, Claudette Johnson, Wenda Lelsie and Keith Piper.

These young artists represent a new wave of Afro-Caribbean art in Britain. Working in print, ceramics, collage and print, they are able to communicate effectively their messages of protest and hope. Their work is imbued with a strong sense of the socially relevant and reflects a new found confidence in the work of black artists in Britain.

The exhibition reflects the collective approach of the Pan Afrikan Connection. Their influences are the traditions of Afro-Caribbean and British art. The monochrome poster-like lettering, the silkscreens of grainy photographs, the restrained use of colour, the spiky handwritten statements all reflect an influence which is British through and through.

The work of the older generation of Afro-Caribbean artists in Britain has been spare, sweet distillations and throbbing visions, produced under the constraint of limited materials and techniques and financial support. They are, for the most part mystics and artist-poets, many of them working from a rastafarian orientation. They are mostly self-taught and express their visions in African and Caribbean forms. They laid a firm foundation for today's advances.

Pan Afrikan Connection are a group of students. This means that they have comparatively more time, materials and technical backup at their disposal, and can fully concentrate on their art. At art college they are able to examine the traditions of Western art, respond and in so doing establish their own collective identity. In the past this has been a big dilemma for those who went for art studies. For the Pan Afrikan Connection, events have clearly swept away all confusion about what it is they have to do.

This exhibition represents an important breakthrough for Afro-Caribbean art in Britain. The Pan Afrikan Connection are well poised to establish a new vision.

SONG FOR THE CHILDREN
(NIFCA Award Winning Poem)

Because
I saw a little boy
On King's Street
This morning
And his nose
Was 'running';
Now I find myself
Wondering
Where his Mummy
And Daddy goes
That his school clothes
Ain't clean clothes. . .
Under Investigation
Most terrible Revelation
Now I hate to say

what I
saw. . .

Part Two
Now the little boy's father is a Policeman
And he mother does witness for Jehovah
So I step back fe i-tate an' fe reason
Ah shake me head and ah draw me pipe
When de situation reveal to me sight
For if de li'l boy doan know 'bout Prayer
Then he bound to know 'bout Prison
So who go sing a Song for de Children?

Ah see how dat youth's mother
Standing on some street corner
Bearing Witness for Jehovah
And ah see he father
Beating-up a Rasta. . .
Ah see how while Mummy shining she cymbal
Daddy oiling he gun
So I take another pull on me pipe,
Stoke it up a little and pose de Question
Who go sing a li'l song for de children?

Part Three
Man sight (up) how while de youth mother
Could be somewhere talking 'bout de 'Holy Grail'
He Old Man could be doing a thousand M.P.H.
In de Police Land-Rover
On 'pun some criminal tail!
Now with that picture
In your imagination
Tell me
If you see
Anybody
To sing any Song for de Children!

Part Four
Now like I say
I sec
De little boy on King's Street
So
It is reasonable
To say
That he does go to school

At Wesley Hall,
 I went to school there too
 And just like him I had to walk. . .
 Now if it was so in my day
 And it still so in he day
 Then something wrong wid the Government Plan
 something wrong wid the Damn System
 Tell me how they going about the Education
 If there's no song for de children?

Part Five
 Now ah lay aside me Pipe
 Fa go and investigate
 The schooling system Syllabus,
 When I read what dey teach as History
 A newspaper column come back to me
 I remember 'Imagine Dat' in de Sunday Sun
 Then I see why de children
 Praise Cortes, and Columbus, Pizarro, Marco Polo,
 Drake and Magellan
 And I sight de source of de condusion
 A frown do so and cross me face
 Ah sit down slow and cross me legs
 Light-up a spliff and lean-back me head
 Ah take a good draw
 Then ah ask de Question
 Who go sing a song for de children?

Part Six
 Now watch,
 If Mummy in de Tabernacle, Hall or Temple
 An' Daddy in de Police Station beating up people. . .
 If Mummy shouting and clapping in Jesus name
 An' Daddy breking up sweet poker game. . .

If Mummy law is de law of de Lord
 An' Daddy law is de law of de Land. . .

If while Mummy reading, "It is written down
 dat man shall use
 de Scared Herb
 for it shall open his eyes. . ."
 Daddy get real vex and say, "Woman all dat is lie. . ."

Now when you sight-up this vast division
 Who de hell left to sing any Song for de children?

Part Seven
 Now when I see all these things
 I understand de little boy situation
 'Cause all it takes is a li'l imagination,
 Ah mean, if de church was telling de truth 'bout Jehovah
 and Justice was to replace de Law
 Ah woulda understand de Great 'Neglection'
 why no song was ever sung
 no song a-tall for de children!

Epilogue
 So de next time
 You see a child
 Wid a 'snotty' nose
 Or you sight-up how
 He got on dirty clothes
 An' if through where
 De shoes burst-out
 You can see he toes
 Stop
 An wonder where he parents goes
 Stop

An' i-tate the situation
 Then you too going KNOW de reason
 you too going FEEL you guts boiling
 you too going THINK 'bout Revolution
 you too going UNITE in singing
 A little song of love for de children!

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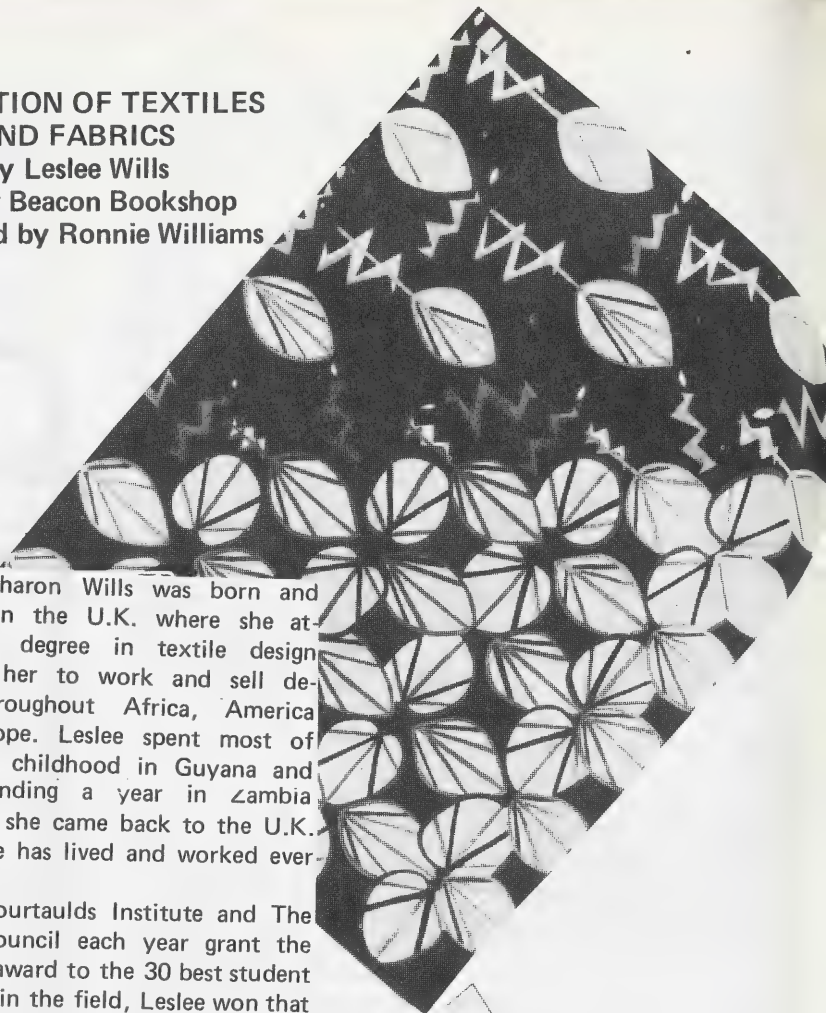
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 A SOCIOLOGICAL READER** Edited by SUSAN CRAIG in 2 paper back volumes, approximately 910 pages, printed by The College Press, Maracas, Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies, 1981. (31 full-length essays, 6 Introductions to sections, contributed by 35 authors on 15 Caribbean populations).

This collection of essays represents all the linguistic areas of the Caribbean. It includes analyses of the range of territories from Suriname to Cuba.

Send order to:- SUSAN CRAIG,
 c/o Department of Sociology, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago, West Indies.

**EXHIBITION OF TEXTILES
AND FABRICS**
by Leslee Wills
at New Beacon Bookshop
Reviewed by Ronnie Williams



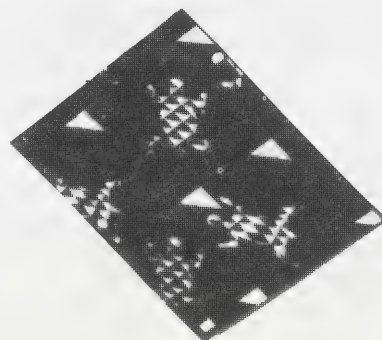
Leslee Sharon Wills was born and studied in the U.K. where she attained a degree in textile design enabling her to work and sell designs throughout Africa, America and Europe. Leslee spent most of her early childhood in Guyana and after spending a year in Zambia 1972/73, she came back to the U.K. where she has lived and worked ever since.

The Courtaulds Institute and The Design Council each year grant the Texprint award to the 30 best student graduates in the field, Leslee won that award after graduating from the Hornsey College of art in 1979. Through Texprint in 1979, Leslee participated in exhibitions at the Courtaulds Institute, Fabrics Olympia in 1980/81 and the Paton Gallery, Covent Garden, in May of this year.

This history now takes Leslee to New Beacon Books at 76 Stroud Green Road where she exhibits 66 works that easily show how Leslee mastered textiles. Her gift is in her depth of feeling for the texture she wishes to interpret and represent. Using sometimes a mixture of media, i.e. paint, ink, pencil, and ink, with careful dexterity of cut pieces, Leslee builds up each picture into nearly abstract constructions of texture. One has to look hard so as not to see the works as sheets of framed fabrics. Most of the pieces are based on grained wall-paper and the feel of each design comes over with great ease.

How does one justify pictures created for fabrics and textiles as a fine art form?

Are they not one-offs to be repeated over and over for patterns on clothes, wallcovering, and the like? They are ideas for the visual, they are art. Leslee Wills takes you beyond the edge of her ideas towards the nature of her influences. This exhibition is a first-class visual reflection of the flora and fauna that can be seen in the indigenous cultures of Africa and the Caribbean.



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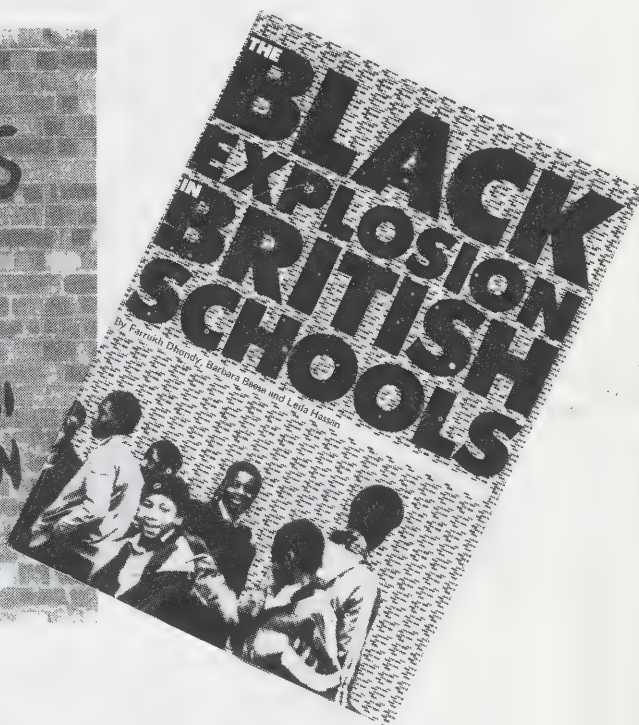
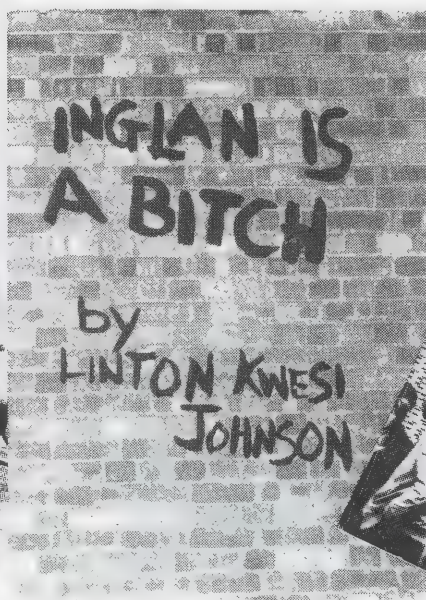
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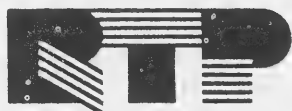
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City of New York
100 Wall Street

March 10, 1904

Dear Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th inst.

and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours,
J. J. [Signature]

